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Hafa Adai!

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Saipan Tribune

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Kitchen explosion kills chef

By KIMBERLY A. BAUTISTA
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REPORTER

An alleged gas leak that led to a kitchen explosion claimed the life of former Tinian Dynasty Hotel & Casino executive sous chef Ramoncito Apostol last Monday.

According to unofficial sources, a kitchen explosion at a bed-and-breakfast last Saturday morning sent Apostol, 54, to the Commonwealth Health Center where he was pronounced dead two days later.

Apostol allegedly died of intense burns all over his body.

Apostol was said to be the head chef of the unnamed bed-and-breakfast where he was employed before his passing.

Details about the incident have

See KITCHEN on Page 4

$5K reward for return of family heirlooms

By KIMBERLY A. BAUTISTA
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REPORTER

Danny Aquino, the director of the CNMI Museum of History and Culture, is offering a $5,000 cash reward—no questions asked—for the return of stolen family heirlooms.

According to Aquino, their home in Susupe was broken into between 7am and 11am yesterday and they were robbed of their priceless jewelry and more.

Aquino, who appeared to be still in shock, said that he is willing to pay, in full, $5,000 for the return of their belongings, or for information

See REWARD on Page 4

MPLT loan eyed to aid NMI govt

By JON PEREZ
jon_perez@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

A bill has been introduced in the House of Representatives that would allow the CNMI government to borrow money from the Marianas Public Lands Trust in a bid to ease its current financial burden.

House Speaker Blas Jonathan T. Attao (R-Saipan), who pre-filed House Bill 21-44, said he would introduce the bill in a session either within the week or next week, and hopes the Senate could also act on it due to the urgency of the legislation.

"We need this for April. We need the money to start paying the vendors owed by the government and circu-

See MPLT on Page 4

JON PEREZ

Department of Finance financial service manager Ryan Camacho, left, and Office of Management and Budget head Virginia Villagomez listen to lawmakers in yesterday's House Ways and Means Committee meeting at the House chamber on Capital Hill.

Budget shortfall to reach $29M

By JON PEREZ
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REPORTER

It now appears that the CNMI government could run short of nearly $30 million this fiscal year.

It was learned after a nearly two-hour grilling of top finance officials by members of the House Ways and Means Committee that the Torres administration expects to see a shortage of $17.9 million in what the government expects to collect this fiscal year, on top of the $12.048 million that was earlier reported. That would bring the budgetary shortfall to $29 million.

The committee resumed yesterday its meeting with representatives of the Department of Finance and the Office of Management and Budget to get a clearer picture of the status of the government's finances.

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INSIDE

BUSINESS
Samsung is pushing back its planned launch of its highly anticipated, $2000 folding phone.
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ASIA
A magnitude 6.1 quake rattled the Philippines and left at least 16 people dead.
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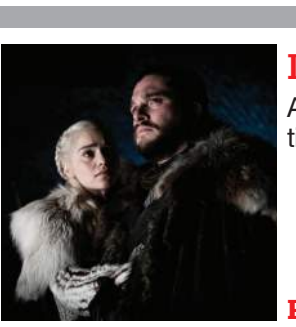

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Are two chief executives better than one?
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Local

Kilili clarifies 'parole bill' status: All parties talking

NEW BUSES
Top Development Inc. just procured three brand-new TEMSA buses from the U.S. mainland to service the T Galleria route, bringing its total fleet to 13 total buses. TDI is the sole land operator of the charter flight between Hong Kong and Francisco C. Ada/Saipan International Airport. CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Delegate Gregorio Kilili C. Sablan (Ind-MP) issued the following statement to clarify yesterday's story in the *Saipan Tribune* titled, "Categorical parole bill hits snag."

"Immigration is one of the most difficult policy areas at this time in Congress, so it was unfair of me to lay the blame for delay of H.R.559 entirely on the Department of Homeland Security.

"In fact, the disagreement that has slowed the bill has come from Congress as well, and from both Democrats and Republicans.

"This is frustrating because there are 1,038 individuals in the Marianas, whose futures are at stake."

"Fortunately, in Washington, [D.C.], during the current two-week Easter break, all parties are talking and making a sincere effort to come to agreement. I am grateful to the Department of Homeland Security and to the House Judiciary and Natural Resources committees for their work. And I remain hopeful that we will be able to pass a bill in the House early next month." ***(PR)***

Talks on what to do with Epina's case continues

By KIMBERLY A. BAUTISTA
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REPORTER

Talks continue whether or not to dismiss with prejudice the charges against a man who allegedly sexually abused a minor.

During a status conference for Joseph Seman Epina last week, a resolution was not reached and a decision has yet to be made whether the charges against him are to be dismissed or not.

Superior Court Associate Judge Joseph Camacho set another status conference for April 24 to continue the discussion.

According to *Saipan Tribune* archives, the 45-year-old Epina was charged with sexual abuse of a minor in the first degree and disturbing the peace. He allegedly sexually abused a 12-year-old girl on March 12, 2016.

The victim has since left the island.

Epina's lawyer, assistant public defender Heather M. Zona, said that Epina has been waiting for nearly three years in jail for his case to be resolved. As a result, Epina and his family have suffered greatly, she said.

When Super Typhoon Yutu hit Saipan last October, Epina was in jail and could not help his family prepare for the typhoon or work on the house., Zona said.

Zona asserted that a criminal defendant has a constitutional right to a speedy trial under both the CNMI and the U.S. constitutions.

She said dismissal is appropriate because the government is responsible for this substantial and unwarranted delay.

However, Office of the Attorney General's Chester Hinds, who recently took over the case, argued last Wednesday that the delay was due to the numerous motions filed by the defense.

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'Federal regulation allows OT for exempt employees'

By ERWIN ENCINARES
erwin_encinares@saipan.com
REPORTER

CNMI Museum executive director Danny Aquino cites an administrative law in disputing a claim that he is an exempt employee and should not receive overtime pay for emergency services rendered following Super Typhoon Yutu in late October 2018.

Aquino said that he and his wife, Saipan Mayor's Office field operations director Joann Aquino, are usually exempted from overtime pay. However, he said that, in times of emergency, the administration reserves the authority to pay them overtime. He cited 5 CFR 551.211(F)(2)(ii) for this.

That law states that: "Regardless of an employee's grade or equivalent level, the agency may determine that an emergency exists that directly threatens human life or safety, serious damage to property, or serious disruption of an activity, and there is no one other recourse other than to assign qualified employees to temporarily perform work or duties in connection with the emergency. In such designated emergency an exempt employee can become non-exempt for any work week in which the employee primary duties for the period of emergency work are non-exempt."

Danny Aquino's primary duty is to run the CNMI Museum; however, he became involved in debris removal in response to Super Typhoon Yutu's devastation.

"I was directly involved in debris recovery with the Saipan Mayor's Office before the governor's directive on Jan. 24, 2019, during the governor's directive, and after the directive. I was assigned to the field…working under the hot sun and extreme weather," Danny Aquino said in a statement.

"I did not spend the holidays with my mom or my family as originally planned before Super Typhoon Yutu caused catastrophic damage. Our home was destroyed [and] personal belongings, clothing, children's photos—all were lost," he said.

He noted that he and his crew, which are all CNMI Museum staff, worked at least six days a week to remove debris "to restore some degree of normalcy to affected families" around Saipan. "I worked extremely hard and tried my best to load as many dump trucks efficiently."

Aquino issued the statement in response to Rep. Edwin K. Propst's (Ind-Saipan) and Rep. Ivan A. Blanco's (R-Saipan) comments when the former blasted those who allegedly received their overtime paychecks ahead of others while also questioning those who received overtime pay while exempt, like Cabinet members.

No access to timekeeping

Danny Aquino further disputed the claim of being included on a list of people who allegedly received their overtime pay in advance. He noted that, in order to receive any overtime compensation from the Federal Emergency Management Agency, one must input Labor forms and FEMA forms on a daily basis.

He noted that time cards are certified and timesheets are prepared only through the timekeeper; documents forwarded are first inspected by another agency; approved timesheets are forwarded to the Finance Department for inspection and inputting; and that checks are printed depending on the availability of funds.

"No one has access to print their own recovery checks. In addition, we were paid the same time as all others from the Saipan Mayor's Office and we are still waiting for other pay periods," Danny Aquino said, adding that Joann Aquino's overtime pay was one of the last five to be handed out in the Saipan Mayor's Office.

Joann Aquino's role in the Saipan Mayor's Office is to disseminate commands from the office to the teams through radio. She assists with coordinating the teams during the debris pickup efforts and even represents the Saipan Mayor's Office during emergency meetings.

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IN SHAKE-AND-BAKE 'ICE' CASE

Federal prosecutor opposes reducing sentence

The U.S. government opposes reducing the sentence to be imposed on a man who confessed that their group "cooked" meth using the so-called shake-and-bake method.

In the U.S. government's sentencing recommendation, assistant U.S. attorney Garth Backe insists that Sidney Capelle Kani is not entitled to a reduced sentence, having expressly admitted to acting as a middleman for drug deals.

Citing Kani's plea agreement, Backe said that Kani admitted that he obtained many items over a two-month span "to use to make meth" which he, along with his conspirators, "would smoke, as well as sell and/or give to other people."

Kani will be sentenced on April 29 at 1:30pm.

In May 2018, Kani pleaded guilty to conspiracy to manufacture and distribute methamphetamine, and manufacture and distribution of methamphetamine on premises where a child is present and resides.

The charges carry a total maximum penalty of not more than 40 years and a fine not to exceed $1.2 million.

In his admissions, Kani said that, between July 1, 2017, and Feb. 25, 2018, his co-defendants—Vincent David Cabrera Jr., Eugene Blas Repeki Jr., and Rick Urumelog Omar Jr.—along with others, agreed to manufacture and distribute meth.

Kani said that, beginning on at least Jan. 1, 2018, he knew of the group's agreement to make and distribute meth and that he joined in the agreement.

The remaining defendants also pleaded guilty. ***(Ferdie de la Torre)***

Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands
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E-Mail: documents@marianaslabor.net

NOTICE TO EMPLOYERS

In accordance with the Employment Rules and Regulations of the Northern Mariana Islands Administrative Code (NMIAC), the CNMI Department of Labor (DOL) mandates compliance of the following to all applicable private sector employers. Failure or refusal to comply is cause for the CNMI DOL to issue a Notice of Violation to the employer and may also result in fines and other sanctions following a due process hearing in the Administrative Hearing Office.

1. Post Job Vacancy Announcement on CNMI DOL website

An employer who intends to employ a foreign national worker, transitional worker, or nonimmigrant alien on a full-time basis (under any new employment arrangement, any renewal of any existing employment arrangement, or any transfer) must post a job vacancy announcement on the DOL website at www.marianaslabor.net. NMIAC § 80-20.1-225(a). No waiver is available for the job vacancy announcement requirement. NMIAC § 80-20.1-225(e).

2. Submit Total Workforce Listing

Each business employer shall report quarterly, as of the last day of the calendar quarter, the number of employees, job classifications, and the hourly wages of employees for whom wages were paid during the quarter. NMIAC § 80-20.1-505(b). The Department requires employers to present this information in a document called "Total Workforce Listing." NMIAC § 80-20.1-505 (d). The Total Workforce Listing may be submitted via email at documents@marianaslabor.net (in excel format).

The Total Workforce Listing is due each quarter:

1st Quarter (January - March)..... due on April 30
2nd Quarter (April - June)..... due on July 31
3rd Quarter (July - September)..... due on October 31
4th Quarter (October - December)..... due on January 31

Attention: The total Workforce Listing for the 1st Quarter 2019 is due on or before April 30, 2019.

3. Adhere to Workforce Participation Minimum Percentage requirement

Any employer, unless exempt, who employs workers on a full-time basis must certify that 30% or more of its full-time employees are U.S. citizens, U.S. permanent residents, and/or CNMI permanent residents. 3 CMC § 4525 and NMIAC § 80-20.1-210(c)(3). Failure to maintain a minimum percentage of 30% will result in a Notice of Violation filed against the employer.

4. Submit new or updated Workforce Plan

A Workforce Plan has as its objective an increase in the percentage of U.S. citizens, U.S. permanent residents, and CNMI permanent residents and the immediate relatives of citizens in the workforce of the employer. NMIAC § 80-20.1-510(a).

All employers, unless exempt, who employ nonimmigrant alien workers, must submit a new or updated Workforce Plan every twelve months. NMIAC § 80-20.1-510(c). A workforce plan shall identify specific positions currently occupied by a foreign national worker. NMIAC § 80-20.1-510(b). The plan shall include a timetable for accomplishing the replacement of the foreign national worker with qualified U.S. citizens, CNMI permanent residents, and U.S. permanent residents until the workforce participation objective is met. NMIAC § 80-20.1-510(b).

The Workforce Plan form is available on the CNMI DOL website under Forms & Publications at www.marianaslabor.net.

CUC trying to reactivate Power Plant 3 for emergency

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

The Commonwealth Utilities Corp. is trying to reactivate Power Plant 3 in Isley Field on Saipan, for use during emergencies or disasters.

CUC executive director Gary P. Camacho said yesterday that they want to establish an independent power system.

Camacho said a small engine will be used at Power Plant 3 just for water wells.

The funding, he said, will be coming from the $7.3-million federal grant for the water hazard mitigation.

Power Plant 3 was deactivated in 2002.

Now that a lot of water wells in the area have been rehabilitated, Camacho said that CUC has determined that Power Plant 3 is important based on the lessons they learned from super typhoons Soudelor and Yutu.

In the event of future disasters, Camacho said CUC wants to be able to turn to Power Plant 3, which will then self-generate a power supply and get the water distribution system moving forward.

He said they will be able to distribute water to approximately 75 percent of their consumers.

Camacho said they are working closely with other agencies to get Power Plant 3 re-established by next year.

Camacho said their target is to complete replacing conductors and wires, and a few other works for power poles, by the end of May.

"However, we are looking to consider the additional work required on power poles that have been identified as damaged or [need] to be replaced," he said.

Camacho said they are going to order about 1,200 to 1,500 more concrete power poles.

Saipan has over 12,000 power poles.

Camacho said the scheduled outages have been challenging, but they are required for the safety of line crews on Saipan and Tinian.

He said they still have a lot of crew working on the water mitigation project. "A lot of that work has been done in the Obyan area and the Isley area," he said.

FROM 2017 TO 2018

23-pct. increase in cancer association clients

By ERWIN ENCINARES
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REPORTER

The Commonwealth Cancer Association has seen a 23-percent increase in the number of its clients in a span of just a year.

During the Marianas March Against Cancer Week proclamation signing yesterday at the Joeten Motors Kia showroom, CCA reported that they saw a 23-percent increase in the number of clients between 2017 and 2018.

In the CNMI, the top five diagnosed cancers based on the CNMI Cancer Registry are gynecological cancers, breast cancer, gastrointestinal cancers, head and neck cancers, and urological cancers.

"The risk of developing most types of cancer can be reduced by changes in a person's lifestyle. Global cancer research indicates that nearly 50 percent of common cancers are preventable," the proclamation states.

"According to the American Institute for Cancer Research, keeping weight at a healthy level, eating a healthy diet, and being physically active can greatly reduce cancer risk," it added.

The annual MMAC celebrates cancer survivors, supports caregivers, remembers lost loved ones, and empowers the CNMI community to fight back against cancer.

According to MMAC committee member Bobby Cruz, proceeds collected from the MMAC would support the CCA's mission to "advocate for a cancer-free CNMI" through early detection, public education, awareness about cancer prevention, cancer screenings, and to "provide hope and support for cancer patients, survivors, and their families through community partnerships and programs."

The 17th MMAC is set to start to happen on May 3, 2019, from 5:30pm to 5:30am on May 4, 2019.

"Thousands of people from all walks of life from across the CNMI will gather to celebrate the perpetual theme of, 'One community! One journey!" said MMAC committee member Carline Sablan. "The theme celebrates the indomitable courage of our people as we choose to stand together in support of those who are fighting cancer."

KITCHEN

From Page 1

been sparse. The Department of Public Safety and the Department of Fire and Emergency Medical Services have yet to release any information about the events that occurred leading to Apostol's death, but the explosion has already been reported in social media and a local television.

Apostol is survived by his three children: Golda, Joshua, and Mikaela Apostol.

A former colleague who has known Apostol for a long time described him a great friend and an equally better chef.

According to *Saipan Tribune* archives, Apostol, grew up in Caloocan City, Philippines and became the executive sous chef for Tinian Dynasty Hotel & Casino in February 2011. As executive sous chef, Apostol was in charge of TDHC's seven outlets as well as about 87 employees.

Apostol worked his way up the culinary ladder at Tinian Dynasty. Apostol then ventured to Saipan and started his job as the chef at the bed-and-breakfast two years ago.

Apostol took up hotel and restaurant management at the University of the East in the Philippines. On his third year in college Apostol opted to receive hands-on training at the Hotel Nikko Manila Gardens. Three years later, Apostol packed up his bags to go to Tinian.

His specialties included the Italian dish osso buco and his own version of sweet and sour pork and lemon chicken.

BUDGET

From Page 1

Finance financial services manager Ryan Camacho and OMB special assistant Virginia Villagomez were on the hot seat for more than two hours in yesterday's meeting where they answered questions from committee members.

Committee chair Rep. Ivan A. Blanco (R-Saipan) told *Saipan Tribune* the weekly meeting with Finance and OMB keeps the Legislature abreast of any changes in revenue collection.

"As you know, any changes exceeding or under $200,000 must be reported to the Legislature," he said.

Based on the report submitted by acting Finance secretary David Atalig, Gov. Ralph DLG Torres had proposed a budget of $233 million for next fiscal year, with the amount available for appropriation at $147 million.

Camacho said the CNMI's economy was experiencing a rebirth when the fiscal year 2019 budget was submitted last year, with tourism numbers up and the lone casino bringing in tax dollars.

House Ways and Means Committee member Rep. Joseph Lee Pan Guerrero (R-Saipan) raises a point during a hearing on Capital Hill yesterday. JON PEREZ

"We have high hopes for the casino industry to continue further with their development. And with that, it all brought a lot of investor confidence in the islands. Of course, the casino industry has experienced a lot of setbacks that are not beyond our control. We also experienced a natural disaster. Businesses were slow to pick up in the first quarter of [fiscal year] 2019," said Camacho.

"So, that could be part of the effect why collections in government revenue is not that high. We expected it to improve in the second quarter with a lot of the outside money coming in in the form of monetary relief. And that hasn't been realized within the second quarter. We are hopeful that it continues to increase in the third and fourth quarters of 2019."

Restaurants and other business establishments in Garapan are comparing their current earnings to the year 2013, when tourism numbers were bleak and economic activity was sluggish. There is optimism, though, that things will pick up entering the third quarter of the current fiscal year.

Camacho said that, as of October 2018 to date, the casino gross revenue tax collected was $41,000 compared to the $40.9 million in 2016, $67.7 million in 2017, and $43.6 million in 2018.

"In the past, we've been collecting from the casino for every month, but they have requested amendments to their tax returns and we are currently working with our legal counsel on how to approach that. The final figures are still being worked out and will be on the way," added Camacho.

He said that the $41,000 CGRT that's been collected so far could be the result of the amendment that was proposed by license holder Imperial Pacific International (CNM) LLC. "It could go both ways, it could go higher or zero."

Camacho said they don't expect to meet the $23 million, or the 25 percent reserved for the Retirement Fund. The CGRT is the source of the funding for the bulk of the 25 percent for the Retirement Fund.

MPLT

From Page 1

late that money," he said.

Attao said the money borrowed from MPLT would settle the amount owed vendors and could then be used by businesses to pay their employees. The expected reimbursement from the Federal Emergency Management Agency and other funds from outside sources would replace that money spent.

When asked about it in yesterday's House Ways and Means Committee meeting on Capital Hill, Department of Finance financial services manager Ryan Camacho said they would support the bill.

"Yes, we are looking for other ways to finance our current expenditures. And that would be very helpful," said Camacho, who was joined by OMB chief Virginian Villagomez at the meeting.

Governor's support

Gov. Ralph DLG Torres has already expressed his administration's support of the bill.

"My administration has taken expenditure reduction measures. …[But] despite these proactive expenditure reduction measures, the Commonwealth is facing a looming fiscal challenge," said Torres in a letter to Attao.

"I have been advised by my acting secretary of Finance [Atalig] that large payments for our bond obligation and retirement settlement fund are due soon," the letter added.

He said his administration remains optimistic that they would still make large payments, payroll, and other expenditures. "My administration believes it would be prudent to obtain a credit facility, such as a line of credit, to ensure we make all our payments on time."

"We have spoken to MPLT about obtaining a line of credit and they are amenable to the idea. As in prior times when MPLT has extended lines of credit or loans to the Commonwealth and its agencies, MPLT would require the Legislature [to] pass a law securing the line of credit through the pledging of future interest income."

Torres asked the Legislature to act on the bill.

"With your assistance and cooperation, I am confident in the government's ability to confront our fiscal challenge and ensure that our obligations to our retirees and creditors will be met while we maintain continuous, stable government," said Torres.

REWARD

From Page 1

that would lead to the arrest of the burglars and the return of their belongings.

Aquino said that his wife Joann, Saipan Mayor's Office director of field operations, discovered the break-in when she went home for lunch.

The burglars had reportedly rummaged through the house and stole only the jewelry box that contained many family heirlooms and sentimental jewelry.

Aquino said the burglar's entry point was through a kitchen window that had been pushed in and the screen slashed. The entry point is so small that Aquino believes a child was made to enter the window and then unlock the door.

Aquino said that some of the things that were stolen were their children's jewelry that they grew out of, a gold bracelet with his wife's name engraved on it that was given to her by her mother, a diamond ring, rubies, wedding coins, and more, many of which could not be replaced because of their sentimental value. Most of the jewelry and items stolen were given to them as keepsakes by family members.

Although the burglary has been reported to the police, Aquino is still seeking the community's help to locate their stolen belongings. "I just want them back, no questions asked," he said.

Aquino said the loss is tragic, especially at this time when the family has not yet fully recovered from the onslaught of Super Typhoon Yutu, since he and his wife have been focusing their efforts on the recovery of the CNMI.

Last Saturday, the home of Kagman High School instructor G Van Gils was also broken into, reportedly the fourth break-in they have had in the last few months. The suspect allegedly stole their security camera but was confronted by a neighbor. The suspect then ran off in a white Toyota Camry with the license plate ACG903. The suspect has yet to be apprehended.

Ex-GWA chief financial officer is CUC's new CFO

The Commonwealth Utilities Corp. has hired Greg Cruz, a former Guam Waterworks Authority's chief financial officer, as CUC's new CFO.

CUC executive director Gary P. Camacho disclosed yesterday that Cruz started work Monday as CUC's CFO, a position that has been vacant since October 2018.

CUC reportedly did not renew Antonio Castro's contract as CFO. Corina Magofna served as acting CFO after Castro's term.

Camacho cited Cruz's extensive utility background at Guam Waterworks Authority as CFO, saying they are happy to have him on board.

"We talked for quite some time and we feel that he's a good fit for the program and understand our financial side, what we need to do," Camacho said.

The executive director said Cruz was vetted by U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, which approved his selection for the position.

Cruz was one of 10 persons who applied for the position.

Camacho said it is very important that they get someone like Cruz, who has a utility financial background.

He said that CUC believes that, with Cruz, they can do better with forecasting their funding requirements over the next five years and understanding rate structures a bit more.

He said they have had several candidates since the previous CFO vacated the position. "However, we believe that [Cruz] is the best fit to the job," said Camacho, adding that they should now be able to get things moving forward. "We're very excited to have him." ***(Ferdie De La Torre)***

Social Security combined trust funds gain one year

The Social Security board of trustees released its annual report yesterday on the long-term financial status of the Social Security Trust Funds with some good news

The combined asset reserves of the Old-Age and Survivors Insurance and Disability Insurance trust funds are projected to become depleted in 2035—one year later than projected last year, with 80 percent of benefits payable at that time.

The OASI trust fund is projected to become depleted in 2034, the same as last year's estimate, with 77 percent of benefits payable at that time.

The DI Trust Fund is estimated to become depleted in 2052, which is 20 years beyond last year's estimate of 2032, with 91 percent of benefits still payable.

In the 2019 Annual Report to Congress, the Trustees announced:

■ The asset reserves of the combined OASI and DI trust funds increased by $3 billion in 2018 to a total of $2.895 trillion.

■ The total annual cost of the program is projected to exceed total annual income, for the first time since 1982, in 2020 and remain higher throughout the 75-year projection period. As a result, asset reserves are expected to decline during 2020. Social Security's cost has exceeded its non-interest income since 2010.

■ The year when the combined trust fund reserves are projected to become depleted, if Congress does not act before then, is now 2035—gaining one year from last year's projection. At that time, there would be sufficient income coming in to pay 80 percent of scheduled benefits.

"The trustees recommend that lawmakers address the projected trust fund shortfalls in a timely way in order to phase in necessary changes gradually and give workers and beneficiaries time to adjust to them," said Nancy A. Berryhill, acting Social Security commissioner. "The large change in the reserve depletion date for the DI Fund is mainly due to continuing favorable trends in the disability program. Disability applications have been declining since 2010, and the number of disabled-worker beneficiaries receiving payments has been falling since 2014."

Other highlights of the trustees report include:

■ Total income, including interest, to the combined OASI and DI Trust Funds amounted to just over $1 trillion in 2018. ($885 billion from net payroll tax contributions, $35 billion from taxation of benefits, and $83 billion in interest)

■ Total expenditures from the combined OASI and DI Trust Funds amounted to $1 trillion in 2018.

■ Social Security paid benefits of nearly $989 billion in calendar year 2018. There were about 63 million beneficiaries at the end of the calendar year.

■ The projected actuarial deficit over the 75-year long-range period is 2.78 percent of taxable payroll – lower than the 2.84 percent projected in last year's report.

■ During 2018, an estimated 176 million people had earnings covered by Social Security and paid payroll taxes.

■ The cost of $6.7 billion to administer the Social Security program in 2018 was a very low 0.7 percent of total expenditures.

■ The combined Trust Fund asset reserves earned interest at an effective annual rate of 2.9 percent in 2018.

The board of trustees usually comprises six members. Four serve by virtue of their positions with the federal government: Treasury Secretary Steven T. Mnuchin as managing trustee; Berryhill; Health and Human Services Secretary Alex M. Azar II,; and Labor Secretary R. Alexander Acosta. Two public trustee positions are currently vacant.

View the 2019 Trustees Report at www.socialsecurity.gov/OACT/TR/2019/. ***(PR)***

Water interruptions in San Vicente, Papago, Obyan, and Upper Dandan

There is currently an emergency water service interruption in San Vicente, Papago, Obyan, and Upper Dandan to allow Commonwealth Utilities Corp.'s water operations personnel to perform repairs on a damaged 8-inch transmission water line north of the Botanical Garden in Papago. Customers in the affected areas should expect restoration of water services by midnight last night. ***(PR)***

Commonwealth Utilities Corporation
Office of the Executive Director

INVITATION FOR BIDS
CUC-IFB-19-019

SUPPLY & DELIVERY OF CHLORINE GAS

The Office of the Executive Director for the Commonwealth Utilities Corporation is soliciting competitive sealed bids from qualified vendors for the Supply and Delivery of Chlorine Gas for Saipan, Tinian & Rota, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

Prospective Bidders for this IFB must pre-register with the CUC Procurement & Supply Division. The IFB package may be obtained from the CUC Procurement and Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room No. 3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, Saipan, between 7:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. and 12:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, except on government observed holidays upon completion of registration and presentation of a receipt evidencing a non-refundable payment to the CUC Treasury Section, by cash, check or credit card in the amount of **$100.00** for one IFB package set.

One (1) original and Five (5) hard copies of the bid must be submitted in a sealed envelope marked *"CUC-IFB-19-019, Supply & Delivery of Chlorine Gas"* to CUC Procurement & Supply Division, 3rd Floor, Room No. 3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, P.O. Box 501220, Dandan, Saipan MP 96950, **no later than 10:00 AM (ChST) on May 17, 2019**, at which time they will be publicly opened and read aloud. Bids mailed via postal or courier service must be received on or before due date and time. Bid shall be submitted on the provided Bid Forms. Bids will be required to be submitted under a condition of irrevocability for a period of 60 days after submission. Late submissions and conditional bids will not be considered.

A *Bid Guarantee* of fifteen (15%) percent of the total bid price must accompany the bids. The security deposit may be in cash, certified check, cashier's check, or bid bond executed by a surety company holding a certificate of authority from the United States Secretary of Treasury as an acceptable surety. All insurers' questions, concerns and qualification shall be handled by the Department of Commerce Office of the Insurance Commissioner (OIC). The OIC is tasked with regulating and monitoring compliance to the CNMI's Insurance Code (Title 4, Division 7). *Bidders are required to submit a clearance from the OIC certifying their insurer of choice is in compliance with the CNMI's Insurance Code.*

Bidders are advised that CUC assumes no responsibility in any act of omission on the part of the bidders due to lack of information or understanding of the bid requirements in the course of Contractor's preparation of a bid under the contract. Bidders are required to comply with all CNMI and applicable Federal Laws. This bid and the ensuing contract shall be executed pursuant to the CUC Procurement Regulations. All responses to this Invitation for Bids should take into account any and all taxes, including excise tax, which will become the obligation of the bidder, awarded a contract.

This Invitation for Bids does not commit CUC to the award of a contract or contracts, nor to pay any cost incurred in the preparation and submission of bids in anticipation of a contract.

Questions or requests for clarification will be entertained only from registered bidders and must be submitted in writing no later than **10:00 AM (ChST) on May 1, 2019** to Manny B. Sablan, CUC Purchasing Administrator, via email address-manny.sablan@cucgov.org with a copy to Yvonne Cabrera, CUC Water Division, Jr. Engineer via email address-yvonne.cabrera@cucgov.org and Christie Sablan, Procurement & Supply, Administrative Support Assistant via email address – christie.sablan@cucgov.org.

CUC reserves the right to reject any or all bids for any reason and waive any defects in said bid proposal, if in its sole opinion, to do so would be in the best interest of CUC. All bids shall become the property of CUC.

GARY P. CAMACHO
Executive Director

MANNY B. SABLAN
Purchasing Administrator

PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY
CNMI GOVERNMENT

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
DPW/DLNR19-RFP-004

SUBMISSION DATE: JUNE 7, 2019 TIME: 10:00 A.M.

AGREEMENT TO FUND, REDESIGN, MAINTAIN AND OPERATE MARINA CONCESSION ON BEHALF OF THE DEPARTMENT OF LANDS AND NATURAL RESOURCES

Governor Ralph Dlg. Torres and Lt. Governor Arnold I. Palacios, through the Department of Public Works through the Department of Lands and Natural Resources (DLNR), are soliciting sealed proposals for the Agreement to Fund, Redesign, Maintain and Operate Marina Concession on behalf of the Department of Lands and Natural Resources, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

This procurement is made in accordance with the CNMI Procurement Regulations, dated 2004 Ed. Proposal procedures shall be in full compliance with **§70-30.3-305** of the regulations.

Prior to being awarded a design contract, the firm or company must have or obtain a valid Certificate of Authorization (COA) from the CNMI Board of Professional Licensing. Information about obtaining a COA may be requested from Ms. Esther S. Fleming, Executive Director, at (670) 234-5897/5898 or fax (670) 234-6040.

The Scope of Work is available on or after **April 17, 2019** at the Department of Public Works, Technical Services Division, 2nd Floor, Oleai Joeten Commercial Center Office No. 214, Saipan.

A Ore-Proposal Conference is scheduled for 9:00 a.m. local time at the Department of Lands and Natural Resources Lower Base Conference Room. Questions regarding this RFP must be submitted in writing to Anthony T. Benavente, Secretary of Department of Lands and Natural Resources no later than 4:30 p.m. local time **May 24, 2019**.

SELECTION CRITERIA: This procurement is made in accordance with §70-30.3-305 of the CNMI Procurement Regulations, dated 2004 Ed. Proposals will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

1. Qualifications of the principal(s) and assigned staff – 25%
2. Experience of the firm(s) on similar type projects – 25%
3. Project Approach – 35%
4. Schedule of Completion – 15%

Discussion shall be conducted with at least three of the firms regarding the contract requirements and technical approach and selection made there from, in order of preference, of no less than three firms determined to be the most highly qualified to perform the services required. Fee proposals are solicited; however, this information shall not be considered in the selection of the most highly qualified Firms. Fee proposals may be used in determing a fair and reasonable price.

Proposers shall also submit a separate statement of qualifications (résumés and experience). The total proposal submitted shall be no more than twenty five (25) pages in length. Note that a firm, which submits a proposal as a prime consultant, *cannot* submit as a subcontractor on another proposal. However, only subcontractors may be included in multiple proposals by different consultants.

Sealed proposals must be marked **"DPW/DLNR19-RFP-004"**. For Proposers within the CNMI, one original and nine (9) copies of proposals must be submitted no later than 9:30 a.m. local time, **June 7, 2019** to the Office of the Director, Division of Procurement & Supply, located at the former Emergency Management Office, Ascencion Drive, Building No. 1301, Capitol Hill, Saipan. Proposers located outside of the CNMI may obtain an additional seven (7) working days for receipt of their proposal by submitting a Notice of Intent to Propose. Notices of Intent to Propose must be received by the Director of Procurement and Supply no later than 9:30 a.m. local time, **June 7, 2019**, and may be transmitted via facsimile to (670) 664-1515, or via e-mail to **procurement@cnmidof.net**. For Proposers located outside the CNMI, one original and five (5) copies of sealed proposals must be postmarked by the U.S. Postal Service or the official government postal service of a foreign country no later than **June 7, 2019** and may be mailed to the Office of the Director of Procurement and Supply at P.O. Box 510008 CK, Saipan MP, 96950 AND must be received no later than the close of business, **June 18, 2019**. Note that failure to submit the required number of copies may be cause for rejection of a proposal.

All responses to this RFP should take into account any and all taxes that will be charged to the proposer(s) awarded a contract for the project, including excise tax.

The government reserves the right to reject any or all proposals and to waive any imperfections in any proposal if, in its opinion to do so, would be in the best interest of the government. All proposals shall become the property of the CNMI government.

/S/ JAMES A. ADA
ACTING SECRETARY OF PUBLIC WORKS

/S/ JACK S. REYES
DIRECTOR,
PROCUREMENT & SUPPLY

/S/ ANTHONY T. BENAVENTE
ACTING SECRETARY OF LANDS AND NATURAL RESOURCES

Alleged drug trafficker is released on bail

By KIMBERLY A. BAUTISTA
Kimberly_bautista@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

A man who is accused of two counts of trafficking of a controlled substance, methamphetamine, was allowed to post bail.

Mark Anthony Benavente, 38, was released to his girlfriend and third-party custodian upon posting 10 percent of his initial bail of $10,000.

Benavente's lawyer, chief public defender Doug Hartig, argued that he is not a flight risk and should be allowed to have his initial bail amount modified.

Superior Court Presiding Judge Robert Naraja approved to modify Benavente's bail and allowed his girlfriend to serve as his third-party custodian.

Other conditions imposed on Benavente is a 7am to 7pm curfew, random drug testing, and Benavente is prohibited from leaving home without his third-party custodian past curfew.

Benavente was arrested following two sting operations by the Drug Enforcement Task Force.

According to the declaration of probable cause, the charges against Benavente are backed by recorded phone conversations and identification by a cooperating source.

The declaration of probable cause states that on Jan. 11, 2018, and Jan. 18, 2018, Benavente was caught, through the task force's cooperating source, distributing "ice" in Chalan Kanoa.

On Jan. 11, 2018, at about 11:35am, task force officers monitored a phone conversation between the cooperating source and Benavente, where they agreed to meet at the Shany Laundry and Poker in Chalan Kanoa to make the transaction.

Although Benavente was initially hesitant on the phone to sell "ice" to the cooperating source, he still went through with it.

Task force officers later showed the cooperating source a picture of Benavente and the source confirmed that the man in the picture was the man he met at the Shany Laundry and Poker.

Task force officers tested the crystalline substance procured from the cooperating source for methamphetamine and the results turned up positive.

The second "buy-walk" operation was on Jan. 18, 2018, at the Shany Laundry and Poker at around 2:19pm.

In May 2015, Benavente was sentenced to two years in prison after pleading guilty to burglarizing and stealing money and an iPad from the Pena House Boutique in Chalan Kanoa.

Scheduled water service interruption on Friday

There will be a scheduled water service interruption in the areas of Airport Road Dandan, Lower Dandan, Chalan Monsignor Martinez Road, As Lito, portions of As Perdido, Saint Jude Church, and portions of Adobu Drive in Koblerville and Tottotville this Friday, April 26, lasting from 8:30am to 4:30pm.

The purpose of the water service interruption is to allow Commonwealth Utilities Corp.'s water operations personnel to perform repairs on a damaged 6-inch transmission water line on Airport Road in Dandan.

As a result of the repair, a more reliable water system will be provided to the community. Customers in the affected areas should expect restoration of water services soon after.

For the safety of our men and women working at the site, motorists are advised to proceed with caution when traveling through the area or to take alternative routes. The northbound lane fronting Hawthorne CAT's warehouse on Airport Road in Dandan will be closed.

For more information, contact the CUC Customer Call Center (664-4282) or monitor CUC's Facebook page for the latest updates (https://www.facebook.comlCommonwealthUtilitiesCorporationl). ***(PR)***

Power outage on Friday

There will be a scheduled power interruption on Friday. April 26, 2019, from 6am to 2pm.

- Outage type: Sectionalized lateral outage on the Feeder 4 distribution circuit
- Village location: Lower Base
- Power Service area(s) affected: Manglen Way and Lower Base Road
- Water well(s) affected: None
- Wastewater lift station(s) affected: None
- Work to be performed: Replace three (3) wooden poles with concrete poles

The purpose of the scheduled power interruption is to de-energize utility lines and allow power line workers from the Commonwealth Utilities Corp.'s contracting company, Primary Source Electric, the ability to safely replace three wooden poles with concrete ones in Lower Base.

Because of the scale of work that will be performed, CUC asks travelers to take alternate routes or to exercise caution when driving through the working area.

For more information, contact the CUC Customer Call Center (664-4282) or monitor CUC's Facebook page for the latest updates (https://www.facebook.corn/CommonwealthUtilitiesCorporation./). ***(PR)***

Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands
Commonwealth Judiciary
Guma' Hustisia, Iimwal Aweewe, House of Justice
P.O. Box 502165, Saipan MP 96950
Telephone (670) 236-9770 Facsimile (670)236-9797

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
RFP19-JUDICIARY-05

SUBMISSION DATE: May 17, 2019 TIME: 10:00 A.M.

"ROOFING INSULATION REPAIRS"

COPIES OF THE SPECIFICATIONS MAY BE OBTAINED AT THE CASHIER WINDOW, WINDOW #1, LOCATED AT THE FRONT GUMA HUSTISIA / IIMWAL AWEEWE / HOUSE OF JUSTICE, SUSUPE, SAIPAN, DURING REGULAR WORKING HOURS.

THE PROVISIONS OF THE CNMI PROCUREMENT REGULATIONS, NMIAC SECTIONS 70-30.3-725 AND 70-30.3-730 PROHIBITING GRATUITIES, KICKBACKS AND CONTINGENT FEES SHALL APPLY.

THE CNMI GOVERNMENT RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY OR ALL PROPOSALS, OR PORTIONS THEREOF, AND WAIVE IMMATERIAL DEFECTS IF TO DO SO WOULD BE IN THE BEST INTEREST OF THE CNMI GOVERNMENT.

/s/ ALEXANDRO C. CASTRO
CHIEF JUSTICE

/s/JOHN T. VILLAGOMEZ
JUDICIARY PROCUREMENT OFFICER

Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands
Commonwealth Judiciary
Guma' Hustisia, Iimwal Aweewe, House of Justice
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REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
RFP19-JUDICIARY-02

SUBMISSION DATE: May 10, 2019 TIME: 10:00 A.M.

"ELEVATOR REPAIRS"

COPIES OF THE SPECIFICATIONS MAY BE OBTAINED AT THE CASHIER WINDOW, WINDOW #1, LOCATED AT THE FRONT GUMA HUSTISIA / IIMWAL AWEEWE / HOUSE OF JUSTICE, SUSUPE, SAIPAN, DURING REGULAR WORKING HOURS.

THE PROVISIONS OF THE CNMI PROCUREMENT REGULATIONS, NMIAC SECTIONS 70-30.3-725 AND 70-30.3-730 PROHIBITING GRATUITIES, KICKBACKS AND CONTINGENT FEES SHALL APPLY.

THE CNMI GOVERNMENT RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY OR ALL PROPOSALS, OR PORTIONS THEREOF, AND WAIVE IMMATERIAL DEFECTS IF TO DO SO WOULD BE IN THE BEST INTEREST OF THE CNMI GOVERNMENT.

/s/ ALEXANDRO C. CASTRO
CHIEF JUSTICE

/s/JOHN T. VILLAGOMEZ
JUDICIARY PROCUREMENT OFFICER

Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands
Commonwealth Judiciary
Guma' Hustisia, Iimwal Aweewe, House of Justice
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REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
RFP19-JUDICIARY-03

SUBMISSION DATE: May 17, 2019 TIME: 10:00 A.M.

"STUCCO REPAIRS"

COPIES OF THE SPECIFICATIONS MAY BE OBTAINED AT THE CASHIER WINDOW, WINDOW #1, LOCATED AT THE FRONT GUMA HUSTISIA / IIMWAL AWEEWE / HOUSE OF JUSTICE, SUSUPE, SAIPAN, DURING REGULAR WORKING HOURS.

THE PROVISIONS OF THE CNMI PROCUREMENT REGULATIONS, NMIAC SECTIONS 70-30.3-725 AND 70-30.3-730 PROHIBITING GRATUITIES, KICKBACKS AND CONTINGENT FEES SHALL APPLY.

THE CNMI GOVERNMENT RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY OR ALL PROPOSALS, OR PORTIONS THEREOF, AND WAIVE IMMATERIAL DEFECTS IF TO DO SO WOULD BE IN THE BEST INTEREST OF THE CNMI GOVERNMENT.

/s/ ALEXANDRO C. CASTRO
CHIEF JUSTICE

/s/JOHN T. VILLAGOMEZ
JUDICIARY PROCUREMENT OFFICER

Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands
Commonwealth Judiciary
Guma' Hustisia, Iimwal Aweewe, House of Justice
P.O. Box 502165, Saipan MP 96950
Telephone (670) 236-9770 Facsimile (670)236-9797

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
RFP19-JUDICIARY-04

SUBMISSION DATE: May 17, 2019 TIME: 10:00 A.M.

"FENCE REPAIRS"

COPIES OF THE SPECIFICATIONS MAY BE OBTAINED AT THE CASHIER WINDOW, WINDOW #1, LOCATED AT THE FRONT GUMA HUSTISIA / IIMWAL AWEEWE / HOUSE OF JUSTICE, SUSUPE, SAIPAN, DURING REGULAR WORKING HOURS.

THE PROVISIONS OF THE CNMI PROCUREMENT REGULATIONS, NMIAC SECTIONS 70-30.3-725 AND 70-30.3-730 PROHIBITING GRATUITIES, KICKBACKS AND CONTINGENT FEES SHALL APPLY.

THE CNMI GOVERNMENT RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY OR ALL PROPOSALS, OR PORTIONS THEREOF, AND WAIVE IMMATERIAL DEFECTS IF TO DO SO WOULD BE IN THE BEST INTEREST OF THE CNMI GOVERNMENT.

/s/ ALEXANDRO C. CASTRO
CHIEF JUSTICE

/s/JOHN T. VILLAGOMEZ
JUDICIARY PROCUREMENT OFFICER

Board of Trustees
Commonwealth Healthcare Corporation
Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands
1 Lower Navy Hill Road Navy Hill, Saipan, MP 96950

Pursuant to 1 CMC § 9911, the Commonwealth Healthcare Corporation hereby gives notice that a Special meeting of the Board of Trustees will be held on Thursday, April 25, 2019 at 12:00 pm in the CEO's Conference Room 3 located at the Administrative Offices.

CHCC Board of Trustees Special Meeting
April 25, 2019 at 12:00 pm

AGENDA

I. Call to Order
II. Determination of Quorum
III. Approval of Agenda
IV. Public Comments
V. To vote and approve Applications for Privileges:
New Applicants:
1) Dr. Cary Kraft
2) Dr. Peter Brett
3) Dr. Elizabeth Culp
4) Dr. Tanuja Edvalson

Renewal Applicants:
5) Dr. Esther Kanayjorn
6) Dr. Michael Deary
7) Ann Rochell Ermitanio, PA
8) Luise Noisom, NP
9) Gayline Blau, NP
VII. Adjournment

P.O. Box 500409 CK, Saipan, MP 96950
Telephone: (670) 236-8201/2 FAX: (670) 233-8756

US govt sues construction company to collect OSHA penalties

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The U.S. government is suing a construction company to collect on $39,849 in penalties slapped against it for alleged violations of Occupational Safety and Health Administration laws in 2013 and 2016.

The U.S. government, through assistant U.S. attorney Jessica F. Wessling, asked the U.S. District Court for the NMI to hold NorthPac Corp. liable to pay $21,876.31 in the first violation and $17,972.88 in the second violation, for a total of $39,849.19 as of April 10, 2019, plus interest and costs.

Saipan Tribune was still awaiting NorthPac Corp.'s comments as of press time.

According to Wessling in the complaint, OSHA first cited NorthPac for numerous OSHA violations and penalized it after an inspection of its job site at the Army Reserve Center's partition fence project in Puerto Rico in 2013.

NorthPac contested the penalties, sat down with OSHA, then came to an agreement about the disputed citations, penalties, and abatement dates.

OSHA says nothing came out of that and, about three months later, it sent a collection letter to the company and demanded the immediate payment of $16,036.

Wessling said that, as of the date of the OSHA complaint, NorthPac has not paid any amount of the penalty assessed for the 2013 violations in the amount of $21,876, including interest and delinquency fee.

In the other case, OSHA again cited NorthPac for alleged numerous violations in 2016 after an inspection of its job site at the Northern Marianas College on Saipan.

Again, NorthPac contested the citations and the proposed penalties.

Wessling said that on Oct. 21, 2016, an OSHA official emailed NorthPac with a proposed settlement agreement that reduced the penalty and grouped the repeat violations into one penalty. NorthPac allegedly did not respond to the email.

In November 2017, the OSHA Commission issued its decision holding that the standards were violated and that the company was in default and the citations were affirmed in their entirety.

Up to now, NorthPac has not paid any amount of the $17,972, despite demand.

Administration rallies behind Atalig's appointment

By JON PEREZ
jon_perez@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The administration of Gov. Ralph DLG Torres is confident that David DLG Atalig has the experience and skills to help manage and budget the finances of the CNMI government, despite the extreme challenge the Commonwealth faces in recovering from the destruction of Super Typhoon Yutu.

In a joint statement attributed to Torres and Lt. Gov. Arnold I. Palacios, it said that even though Atalig is a new appointee to the Cabinet, he is no stranger to the CNMI government, having held various government posts in the past.

The expression of support came as the Senate Executive Appointments and Government Investigation Committee, chaired by Sen. Francisco Q. Cruz (R-Tinian), ratcheted up its public hearings for the confirmation of Atalig as Finance secretary.

The committee started the hearing last week on Rota. Another public hearing was held yesterday on Tinian. The one on Saipan will be held at the Senate chamber tomorrow, April 25.

Atalig finished college with a Bachelor of Arts in Business Administration degree with emphasis in Finance and Management at the University of San Diego. He also earned certificates and had trainings in accounting, business management, and institutional planning and budget.

"After returning to the CNMI from college in San Diego, he served as a budget officer for the Northern Marianas College, and eventually became the director of Finance and Administrative Services in 2002," said the administration statement. "He then served as the director of Finance for the Department of Public Lands in 2006, before moving back to the [U.S. mainland] where he served Portland State University and the University of California-San Diego as a fiscal officer and a financial analyst."

The administration said that government finances and budget management are among Atalig's strongest skills—skills that will stand him in good stead as he drives the Finance Department's strategic direction in the next four years.

"He intends to reform one of the government's most important departments. He understands that not just the Commonwealth, but the whole world is growing and rapidly changing to keep up with the demands of increased globalization," the administration said.

"He sees this as an opportunity for finance and our other government agencies to adapt to the new fiscal conditions facing the CNMI and to ensure cost-effective outcomes across government."

Labor claims v poker owners, principals dismissed

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The federal court dismissed Monday the claims of four cashiers against two poker operators and their two principals for allegedly not paying them the minimum wage and overtime pay.

U.S. District Court for the NMI Chief Judge Ramona V. Manglona issued the dismissal after the parties came to a settlement.

All claims against Zeng's American Corp. and Dongfang Trading Corp. were dismissed with prejudice. Zeng's American Corp. owns Happy Poker, while Dongfang Trading Corp. owns Happy Poker II.

This means the cashiers—Katrina Del Gallego Demapan, Ma. Gina Tiozon, Mary Jane G. Muhi, and Emelinda E. Sanchez—can no longer refile their claims against the two corporations.

Manglona dismissed without prejudice the cashiers' claims against individual defendants Jin Dong Zeng and Xiu Fang Huang.

Zeng is the principal of Zeng American Corp., while Huang is the principal of Dongfang Trading Corp.

Dismissal without prejudice means the cashiers may refile their claims in the future against the two.

Mark B. Hanson is counsel for the four cashiers. Cong Nie is counsel for Zeng's American Corp. and Zeng. Robert T. Torres is the lawyer for Dongfang Trading Corp. and Huang.

Manglona approved the settlement agreement last March 22. That agreement requires Zeng American Corp. and Dongfang Trading Corp. and their principals to pay $200,000 to settle the lawsuit.

Demapan, Tiozon, Muhi, and Sanchez first filed the lawsuit in April 2018 against just Zeng's American Corp. and Zeng for alleged violation of the Fair Labor Standards Act.

At that time, Demapan, Tiozon, and Sanchez were employed by the corporations. Tiozon is no longer an employee.

In November 2018, the plaintiffs added two more defendants—Dong Fang Trading Corp. and Huang.

The parties then reached a settlement.

Under the settlement deal, the parties agreed for the poker operators to provide an initial payment of $50,000 to the plaintiffs and 24-month installment plan for the balance of the $200,000.

Individual defendants Zeng and Huang have provided security to the settlement in the form of two mortgages on their leasehold and subleasehold interests in property on Saipan.

Roger Thompson
One Broadway 391 Tinian MP
788-0295

Pro se

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

ROGER THOMPSON Petitioner vs. COMPONG THOMPSON Respondent TO: COMPONG THOMPSON) FCD-DI-CIVIL ACTION NO. 19-0170 **SUMMONS**

YOU ARE HEREBY SUMMONED and notified to file any answer you wish to make to the Complaint, a copy of which is given to you herewith, within thirty (30) days after service of the Summons upon you, and to deliver or mail a copy of your answer to Roger Thompson whose mailing address is ONE BROADWAY 391 TINIAN MP as soon as practical after filing your answer or sending it to the Clerk of Court for filing.

Your answer should be in writing and filed with the Clerk of Court at Susupe, Saipan, MP 96950. It may be prepared for you by your counsel and sent to the Clerk of Court by messenger or mail. It is not necessary for you to appear personally until further notice. If you fail to file an answer in accordance with this Summons, Judgement by Default may be taken against you for relief in the Complaint.

Dated this 9th day of April, 2019.
/s/ Clerk of Court

COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS
STATE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD

Special Meeting Announcement

When: Friday, April 26, 2019
Time: 9:00 am – 11:00 am
Location: Northern Marianas College BOR Conference Room

AGENDA

1. Roll Call and Establishment of Quorum
2. Review and Adoption of Agenda
3. Review and Adoption of Minutes – None
4. Public Comments (5 Minutes per Commenter)
5. New Business
   a. Brief summary of Education Summit;
   b. Review and update of the CNMI WDB State Plan and recent changes in federal labor laws;
   c. Update on DOL-WIA Activities;
   d. Upcoming Technical Assistance Visit from USDOL-ETA
6. Executive Session
7. Next Meeting
8. Adjournment

Approved by:
/s/ Josephine DLG. Mesta
Chair, SWDB

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE
COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

In Re General Order) Notice to Claimants and Order to Appear

THE COMMONWEALTH JUDICIARY has in its possession certain third party funds, which have remained unclaimed for more than one year. According to court records, the following people may be entitled to have funds returned to them

Name	Case Name	Case Number
1. Xian Ping Zhao	CNMI v. Xian Ping Zhao	CR-02-0084
2. Chen Jin Yan	CNMI v. Chen Jin Yan	CR-02-0100
3. Peter Hoashi Lizama	CNMI v. Peter Hoashi Lizama	CR-08-0029
4. Jin Wook Cho	CNMI v. Jin Wook Cho	CR-08-0187
5. Rhodora Tesero	CNMI v Hamilcar Fajutag	CV-07-0471
6. Guofu Shan	OAG/DOIS v. Liu, Zhenggan	CV-08-0145
7. Kevin Sablan	Kevin's Video v. Asar L. Elameto	SC-04-0108
8. Hak Kyun Kim	CNMI v. Hak Kyun Kim	TR-00-00844
9. Jae Soo Song	CNMI v. Jae Soo Song	TR-02-01676
10. Kook Hwan Keum	CNMI v. Kook Hwam Keum	TR-01-03927
11. Byung Chul Kim	CNMI v. Byung Chul Kim	TR-07-00557
12. Long Tian Jin	CNMI v. Long Tian Jin	TR-98-0794

The aforementioned parties shall have until Thursday, October 24, 2019 to make a claim with the Judiciary for the return of these funds. In order to make a claim, parties must complete a form, which is available at the Clerk of Court's window. Upon completion, parties shall submit the original and two photocopies of the form, together with two photocopies of a valid passport and/or government-issued photo identification, to the Clerk of Court located at Door Window 1 of the Guma Hustisia, Iimwaal Aweewe on Saipan, Northern Mariana Islands. Claims must be submitted to the Clerk of Court and may be brought from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Monday through Friday of each week. Any funds belonging to the parties named above that remain unclaimed after Thursday, October 24, 2019 may be forfeited and turned over to the Commonwealth General Fund. On October 25, 2019 all parties named above shall appear before Associate Judge Joseph Camacho in Courtroom 212A at the Marianas Business Plaza at 10:00 a.m. and await the call of his or her claim by case number and captioned parties. Parties must bring a copy of their claim form with them when appearing for this court proceeding.

ENTERED April 24, 2019.

/s/_____
ROBERTO C. NARAJA
Presiding Judge

US Coast Guard now recruiting in the CNMI

SANTA RITA, Guam—Luis R. Hofschneider of Tinian is one of 31 applicants across the nation who received a primary selection for the U.S. Coast Guard's College Student Pre-Commissioning Initiative program in 2018.

Having completed the Coast Guard's 53-day recruit training, the University of Guam junior began his first semester under the program last fall.

Once Hofschneider graduates from UOG, he will receive a guaranteed commission as an officer in the U.S. Coast Guard after completing the 17-week Officer Candidate School training.

"While being in the CSPI program, I can finish my undergraduate degree while also gaining valuable Coast Guard experience at local units," said Hofschneider. "The education, training, and exposure I am currently receiving while in the program will undoubtedly be highly beneficial as I embark on my journey toward becoming a commissioned officer in the U.S. Coast Guard."

Hofschneider is the son of Freddy U. Hofschneider Jr. and Rinenta R. Hofschneider and the youngest of five siblings. His older brother, Lt. Freddy Hofschneider III, is also serving in the U.S. Coast Guard.

"CSPI students are E-3 officer trainees and receive all pay and benefits as an E-3 in addition to the scholarship element," said Chief Petty Officer Todd Roys, recruiter-in-charge, Recruiting Office Honolulu. "Schools in the Guam-CNMI Saipan area qualifying for the CSPI program are Northern Marianas College, University of Guam, and Pacific Islands University [in] Mangilao, Guam.

"Most colleges in Hawaii also meet the criteria for CSPI. This program is a great way to pay for college and become a commissioned officer all while bringing greater variety and experience to our service," Roys added.

CSPI is a scholarship program designed for college juniors and seniors who demonstrate a high caliber of academic and leadership excellence. Students who receive acceptance into this scholarship program will be enlisted into the U.S. Coast Guard, complete basic training during the summer, and receive full funding for up to two years of college.

Funding includes not only payment of tuition, books, and fees, but a full-time Coast Guard salary as a seaman apprentice, housing allowance, and medical benefits.

Selectees must participate in four hours of weekly Coast Guard duties during the school year and some additional training during breaks. Only eligible to students attending or accepted to accredited colleges or universities designated as a Minority Serving Institute, the CSPI program provides hands-on training to students who have a desire to succeed.

CSPI is one of several programs to become an officer in the U.S. Coast Guard. Personnel from the Coast Guard Academy, including Hofschneider, will be on Saipan, Tinian, and Rota until April 30.

Luis R. Hofschneider of San Jose, Tinian, stands for a photo aboard a Coast Guard Station Apra Harbor 45-foot Response Boat-Medium in Guam in April. He is one of 31 applicants across the nation who received a primary selection for the Coast Guard's College Student Pre-Commissioning Initiative program in 2018. and having completed the Coast Guard's 53-day recruit training, the University of Guam junior began his first semester under the program last fall. Once Hofschneider graduates from UOG, he will receive a guaranteed commission as an officer in the U.S. Coast Guard after completing the 17-week Officer Candidate School training.

U.S. COAST GUARD

For those who have graduated high school, or would like more one-on-one time, the Coast Guard's representatives will be available at the following municipal offices from 1pm through 5pm. Walk-ins are welcome. To schedule a one-on-one meeting with the U.S. Coast Guard's representatives, contact Lt. Christine T. Igisomar (christine.t.igisomar@uscg.mil).

- Saipan Mayor's Office on April 22 to 26
- Rota Mayor's Office on April 29
- Tinian Mayor's Office on April 30

The U.S. Coast Guard is a military, multi-mission, maritime service within the Department of Homeland Security and one of the nation's five Armed Forces. Its core roles are to protect the public, the environment, and the U.S. economic and security interests in America's coasts, ports, and inland waterways. Serving in the U.S. Coast Guard allows its members to travel worldwide, and duty stations include Guam, Hawaii, the mainland United States, the Caribbean, Europe, and the Middle East. As one of the five branches of the Armed Forces, all service members earn competitive pay, benefits, and educational opportunities.

For more information on how to apply to the CSPI program, call the Coast Guard's Honolulu Recruiting Office at 808-486-8677 or visit www.gocoastguard.com. ***(USCG)***

Triple J donates over $24K worth of prizes to Hyatt golf tourney

Triple J Motors donates a 2019 CX-5 Sport valued at $23,995 as a hole-in-one prize at this year's 23rd Annual Charity Golf Classic.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Triple J Saipan continues its platinum sponsor status in this year's 23rd Annual Charity Golf Classic.

As a hole-in-one highlight for this year, Triple J Motors donated a 2019 CX-5 Sport valued at $23,995. In addition, Triple J Wholesale Foods, Hertz Rent-A-Car, Tony Roma's, Capricciosa, Bubba Gump, Surf Club, and Great Harvest have also donated nearly $2,000 worth of in-kind donations.

The donation from Triple J Saipan will aid this year's beneficiaries: Make-A-Wish Foundation of Guam and CNMI, 500 Sails, NMI Rollers Basketball Association, Isla Montessori School, and 4H Marianas.

In a statement attributed to Robert H. Jones, chairman and chief executive officer of Triple J Enterprises, Inc., it says that Hyatt Regency Saipan has been a long-time partner of Triple J Saipan, Inc.

"We are privileged to once again support mission behind the tournament—to make a difference in the lives of those within our island community. We rest assured the dollars generated from the 23rd Annual Charity Golf Classic will directly benefit those in need. As a community member on island for over 30 years, we take every opportunity to work alongside those who share in the same values of commitment, integrity and especially customer satisfaction," the statement adds.

Jay Santos, Five Star Wholesale Foods and Triple J Truckload Store general manager, said that Hyatt Regency Saipan "always hosts an amazing golf tournament, one that we look forward to supporting every year. Triple J Saipan, Inc. is super excited to have Nathan's Hotdog tent at hole No. 10 and to serve bread from Great Harvest Bread Co. bSaipan sampled by golfers at registration. For those who make it to the poolside banquet dinner, which I personally recommend, they will have the opportunity to enjoy our Certified Angus Beef cuts – the very best, juicy and packed with flavor. I encourage golfers to register, proceeds will benefit our island community in more than one way."

Ty Pauling, the Food and Beverage director at Hyatt, reiterated the long-term business partnership of Triple J Saipan and Hyatt Regency Saipan.

"The extended support we receive from Triple J for our annual tournament is immeasurable. Triple J Saipan shares in our mission to care for those within our community," he said. "Triple J has consistently delivered great hole-in-one prizes and provided the highest quality food- stuffs to our players on the course, and, at our poolside awards banquet." ***(PR)***

3 GCA students win in Bridge Capital art contest

Three Grace Christian Academy students won big cash prizes at this year's Bridge Capital LLC art contest.

Two GCA students won in the ages 11-and-under category. First place went to 5th grader Alyssa Kim, who won $750, while 4th grader Alvin Han won second place and a $500 cash prize.

In the student category, Cheng Si Conrad Bao, a 9th grade student at GCA, won second place with a $1,000 cash prize.

The winners were announced during the first day of the Flame Tree Arts Festival last April 12, 2019.

Kim's entry, called "Paradise," is a painting of a colorful parrot and a beautiful Bird of Paradise flower. Hans did a very detailed "Legend of Saipan" painting inside a turtle image. Bao submitted his project in Environmental Science under Geri Rodgers titled "Dancing Lady" using recycled materials such as paper and plastic trash bag for the ballerina's tutu.

This was the Bridge Capital's ninth year of the art competition, which is open to all ages in different categories.

Out of the over 340 entries this year, over 100 were from GCA students, especially from Kindergarten to elementary for ages 11-and-under category, whose artwork were done during art classes under Esther Manzano.

Bridge Capital LLC chief executive officer John Baldwin said that the goal of the annual competition is to give artists a chance to show their work, show their talent and to reward them for having the courage to produce works of art. ***(Saipan Tribune)***

Grace Christian Academy's Bridge Capital Annual Art Contest winners have their picture taken at the school's Raymond S. Kinsella Library.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Japanese media to feature the Marianas

With the commencement of direct flight service between Tokyo and the Marianas by Skymark Airlines Inc., two Japanese media outlets, Genic and Oceana, recently visited the islands to share more about this tropical destination with their followers.

Genic targets women in their 20s and 30s who are interested in travel and photography and brought Japanese Instagrammers and models Anna Haneishi and Anri Nakajima to the Marianas.

Highlighted sites on Rota will include award-winning Teteto Beach, Chenchon Bird Sanctuary, As Nieves Latte Stone Quarry, Rota Swimming Hole, Songsong Lookout, and Senbon Yashi.

Highlighted sites and attractions on Saipan will include parasailing and other activities at Managaha, Saipan Subsea submarine tour, the recent mural of MVA resident Instagrammer Ami Otsuka at the Commonwealth Health Care Corp. and Francisco C. Ada/ Saipan International Airport, Micro Beach, and The Shack.

Japanese Instagrammers and models Anna Haneishi, left, and Anri Nakajima visit the Marianas in March 2019. MVA

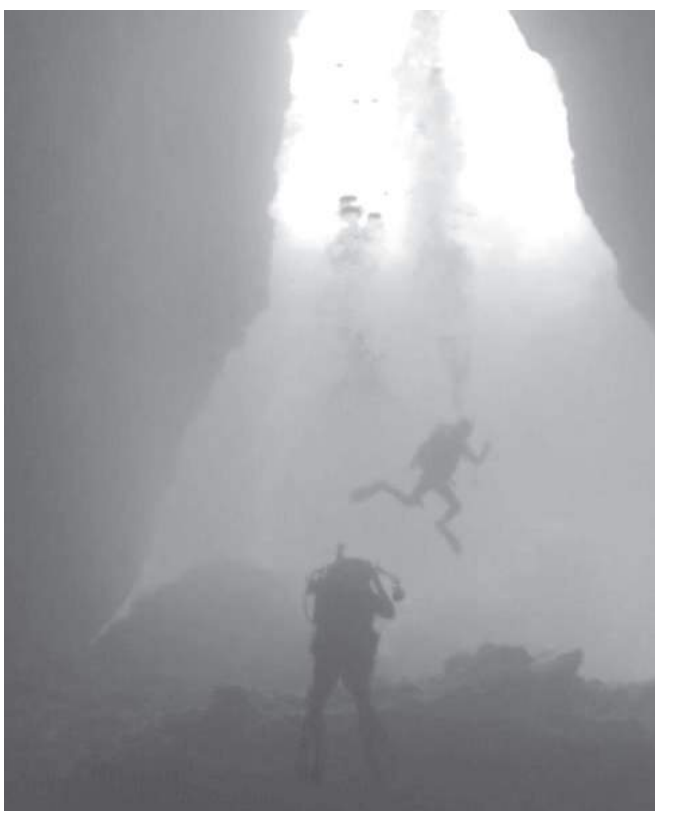
The media group lodged at Hyatt Regency Saipan during their familiarization tour.

Oceana is Japan's most popular online diving medium and targets divers and snorkelers. The website will feature diving on Tinian, Rota, and Saipan, including popular sites such as cavern Grotto, Laulau Beach, Obyan, Ice Cream, cavern Spotlight, and wreck Shoan-maru. Downtown Garapan and Mt. Tapachao will also be featured.

"It's significant to see renewed interest in the Marianas by Japanese media, and the Marianas Visitors Authority will continue to support media [familiarization] tours such as these as a strategic use of our available funding," said acting MVA managing director Judy Torres. "The estimated ad exposure value of these two [familiarization] tours is over $60,000, and we are working to entice more Japanese media to visit as we reboot the Japan market."

The online media were in the Marianas from March 22 to 29, 2019, and will feature the destination in June prior to the commencement of regular direct flights by Skymark Airlines. ***(MVA)***

Japanese Instagrammer and model Anri Nakajima visits Micro Beach in March 2019. MVA



Saipan's Grotto is filmed by Japan's No. 1 online diving outlet, Oceana, on March 27, 2019, in preparation for a June feature on diving in the Marianas. MVA

Burglary suspect pleads not guilty

A man who allegedly broke into a home in Kagman back in 2018 has pleaded not guilty during his arraignment Monday.

Julio Litulumar Emangmai, 33, pleaded not guilty to all three charges filed against him by the government.

Superior Court Associate Judge Wesley Bogdan ordered Emangmai to return on June 3 at 9:30am for a status conference before Presiding Judge Robert Naraja.

Emangmai is facing multiple charges, including burglary, theft, and criminal mischief, punishable by over five years imprisonment and over $5,000 in fines.

Emangmai, through his lawyer, waived the reading of his rights and charges, requested the preservation of all his constitutional rights, and requested a case management order from the court to obtain discovery of material warranting the charges against him.

According to court information, Emangmai stole over $400 worth of items and damaged over $250 worth of property at the home of Cesar Tayang Libut in Kagman last Aug. 2, 2018.

Emangmai allegedly stole a skill saw, a water level construction tool, and damaged the building's glass door. ***(Kimberly A. Bautista)***

Commonwealth Utilities Corporation
Office of the Executive Director

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
CUC-RFP-19-017

ARCHEOLOGICAL MONITORING for LOWER BASE SEWER PHASE 1 – LIFT STATION AND FORCEMAIN

The Office of the Executive Director, Commonwealth Utilities Corporation (CUC) is soliciting competitive sealed proposals from qualified firms for the Archeological Monitoring of the Construction of Lower Base Sewer Phase 1 – Lift Station and Forcemain in Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

This work consists of monitoring and inspection of excavation works for the Lower Base Sewer Project. The consultant also will be required to document and create a final report acceptable by CUC and the CNMI Historical Preservation Office. CUC requires the Project to be completed as per the Request for Proposal (RFP) highlights from the date of award of contract.

This project is funded by a grant from the United States Economic Development Authority (USEDA) and the Department of Interior (USDOI). The award of this project is contingent upon receipt of the approval for project award from USEDA and USDOI.

Prospective Proposers must pre-register with the CUC Procurement & Supply Division. The RFP may be obtained from the CUC Procurement and Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room No. 3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, Saipan, between 7:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. and 12:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, except on government observed holidays, upon completion of registration and presentation of a receipt evidencing a non-refundable payment to the CUC Treasury Section, by cash, check or credit card in the amount of $50.00 (non-refundable) for one RFP package set.

A Pre-Proposal Conference followed by a Site Visit is scheduled on **April 18, 2019 10:00 AM (ChST)** at the CUC Main Conference Room, 3rd Floor, Room No.17, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building. Prospective Proposers are mandated to attend the Pre-Proposal Conference and Site Visit.

One (1) Original and Five (5) Hard Copies must be submitted in a sealed envelope marked "CUC-RFP-19-017 Archeological Monitoring for Lower Base Sewer Phase 1 – Lift Station and Forcemain, " to the CUC Procurement & Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room No. 3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, P.O. Box 501220, Saipan, MP 96950, no later than **10:00 AM (ChST) on May 10, 2019**. Late submissions and conditional proposals will not be considered.

Discussions may be conducted with responsible Proposers who submit proposals determined to be reasonably susceptible of being selected for award for the purpose of clarification and to ensure full understanding of and responsiveness to solicitation requirements. Proposers shall be accorded fair and equal treatment with respect to any opportunity to discussion and revision of proposals, and such revision may be permitted after submission and prior to award for the purpose of obtaining the best and final offers. During discussions, there will be no disclosure of any information derived from proposals submitted by competing Proposers.

Proposers are advised that CUC assumes no responsibility in any act of omission on the part of the Proposer due to lack of information or understanding of the proposal requirements in the course of Contractor's preparation of a proposal or supply under the contract. The RFP does not commit CUC to award a contract, to pay any cost incurred in the preparation of the proposal under this request, or to procure or contract for services. Proposers are required to comply with all CNMI and applicable Federal Laws. This RFP and the ensuing contract shall be executed as per the CUC Procurement Regulations.

All responses to this RFP should take into account any and all taxes, including excise tax, which will become the obligation of the proponent awarded a contract. Successful proponents will be required to submit a copy of a valid CNMI Business license in compliance with the Contractor's Registration and Licensing Laws of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, upon award of the contract. The Contractor and all subcontractors will be obligated to pay wage rates not less than the current CNMI minimum wage, prevailing through the period of contract, as indicated in the web page: https://marianaslabor.net/. The proponents shall be required to comply with all applicable CNMI and Federal Laws.

Questions or requests for clarification will be entertained only from registered Proponents and must be submitted in writing no later than **10:00 AM (ChST) on April 22th 2019**, to Manny B. Sablan, CUC's Purchasing Administrator via email at manny.sablan@cucgov.org with a copy to Christie L. Sablan via email at christie.sablan@cucgov.org CUC's Purchasing Assistant and to Travis Spaeth, CUC's Project Engineer via email at travis.spaeth@cucgov.org.

CUC reserves the right to reject any or all proposals and waive any imperfection in the proposal in the best interest of the government. All proposals shall become the property of CUC.

GARY P. CAMACHO
Executive Director

MANNY B. SABLAN
Purchasing Administrator

Commonwealth Utilities Corporation
Office of the Executive Director

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
CUC-RFP-19-020

SUPPLY & DELIVERY OF TWO SLUDGE DEWATERING EQUIPMENT'S

The Office of the Executive Director for the Commonwealth Utilities Corporation (CUC), is soliciting competitive sealed proposals from qualified vendors for the purchase of two Sludge Dewatering Equipment's; one for the Agingan Wastewater Treatment Plant and the Sadog Tasi Wastewater Treatment Plant for CUC Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

The RFP Package may be obtained from the CUC Procurement and Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room No. 3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, Saipan, between 7:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. and 12:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, except on government observed holidays. The RFP package consisting of the specifications and scope-of-work will be emailed to all registered prospective proposers email ID. Prospective Proposers must pre-register with the CUC Procurement & Supply Division.

One (1) original and four (5) hard copies, must be submitted in a sealed envelope marked *"CUC-RFP-19-020, Supply and Delivery of Two Sludge Dewatering Equipment's"* to the CUC Procurement & Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room No. 3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, P.O. Box 501220, Saipan, MP 96950, **no later than May 23, 2019 at 10:00 AM (ChST)**. Late submissions and conditional proposals will not be considered.

Discussions may be conducted with responsible offerors who submit proposals determined to be reasonably susceptible of being selected for award for the purpose of clarification and to ensure full understanding of and responsiveness to solicitation requirements. Offerors shall be accorded fair and equal treatment with respect to any opportunity to discussion and revision of proposals, and such revision may be permitted after submission and prior to award for the purpose of obtaining the best and final offers. During discussions, there will be no disclosure of any information derived from proposals submitted by competing offerors.

All Offeror are advised that CUC assumes no responsibility in any act of omission on the part of the Offeror due to lack of information or understanding of the proposal requirements in the course of Contractor's preparation of a proposal or supply under the contract. The RFP does not commit CUC to award a contract, to pay any cost incurred in the preparation of the proposal under this request, or to procure or contract for services. Offeror are required to comply with all CNMI and applicable Federal Laws. This bid and the ensuing contract shall be executed as per the CUC Procurement Regulations.

All responses to this RFP should take into account any and all taxes, including excise tax, which will become the obligation of the proponent awarded a contract.

Questions or requests for clarification will be entertained only from pre-registered prospective proposers and must be submitted in writing no later than **10:00 AM (ChST) on May 10, 2019** to Manny B. Sablan, CUC Purchasing Administrator at email address manny.sablan@cucgov.org with a copy to Westen Knudsen, P.E., Senior Engineer for Water/Wastewater at email address westen.knudsen@cucgov.org and Christie Sablan, CUC Purchasing Administrative Senior at email address christie.sablan@cucgov.org.

CUC reserves the right to reject any or all proposals for any reason and to waive any defects in said proposal, if in its sole opinion, to do so would be in the best interest of CUC. All proposals shall become the property of CUC.

GARY P. CAMACHO
Executive Director

MANNY B. SABLAN
Purchasing Administrator

Opinion

Hafa Adai!
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EDITORIAL

Have faith: Vaccination works

Measles—a serious communicable disease older Americans may remember enduring as children—made an unwelcome reappearance in Ocean County, N.J., late last year, and more recently, in New York, Texas, and some 17 other states. And at Temple University, an isolated outbreak of more than 100 cases of mumps had been reported by the beginning of April.

These events, like the diseases themselves, are different. But both measles and mumps have been largely kept under control for decades by childhood immunization programs. And their recent reappearances have arisen during a plague of pseudoscience and conspiracy theorizing that has for the last 20 years chipped away at the pro-vaccination consensus reached in the second half of the 20th century.

The measles outbreak is concerning enough that New York has closed schools and seeks to make vaccination mandatory in some affected neighborhoods. Nationally, the new cases also may bolster legislative efforts to tighten the availability of, redefine, or eliminate state-level religious and or philosophical exemptions that parents skeptical of or virulently opposed to vaccination may seek to avoid having their children immunized.

Like many other states, New Jersey and Pennsylvania provide for religious and philosophical as well as medical exemptions. Three states—Mississippi, West Virginia, and California—grant exemptions solely for medical reasons. New Jersey would be wise to follow this example, as has been suggested by Assembly health committee chairman Herb Conaway Jr. (D., Burlington), a physician. Pennsylvania ought to take a look at this as well.

In 1998, flawed, and eventually debunked, research purportedly asserted linkage between some vaccines and autism spectrum disorder. The rise of social media has since enabled the spread of an "anti-vaxx" gospel, complete with celebrity spokespeople.

Younger Americans with no memory or awareness of the potential seriousness of measles and other diseases largely eradicated in recent decades may be more prone to question immunization programs. Worried parents have every right to ask questions, and to receive compassionate and accurate answers.

Experts such as Arthur L. Caplan, a professor of bioethics at the NYU School of Medicine, suggest social media platforms should be encouraged to remove fake material about vaccines. Parents, he said, need to understand that a decision to shield their child from an imaginary danger may well put that child, and other children, at genuine risk.

"About 85 percent of parents who are hesitant just want to know if there's fire where there's smoke. But you're never going to be able to educate the conspiracy theorists," noted Paul A. Offit, chairman of vaccinology in the pediatrics department at UPenn's Perelman School of Medicine. Interviewed last week on NPR, Offit reminded listeners about Philadelphia's deadly 1991 measles outbreak, which killed nine and sickened more than 1,000 children.

Measles erupted among the congregations at two churches in the city where faith healing was preached and modern

See FAITH on Next Page

I AM THOU SHALT KEEP THOU
SHALT NOT BEAR FALSE NOT
WHEN WILL WE BE ABLE TO SEE THE UNREDACTED VERSION?
grimmy.com
MIKE PETERS

Surprise! Social Security has gotten healthier

By MICHAEL HILTZIK
Los Angeles Times

The crux of the conservative attack on Social Security in recent years has been the claim that the program is on an unbroken path to insolvency. Monday's release of the Social Security trustees' annual report knocks a pillar out from under that campaign, for it shows that the program actually got healthier during the last year.

The trustees predicted that the program's reserves—that is, the trust funds of its retirement and disability components—will be exhausted in 2035. In last year's report, the trustees pegged that date at 2034. In other words, the trust funds' exhaustion last year was 16 years away; this year it's still 16 years away.

To use a different metric, the cost of making Social Security perfectly solvent has come down. Last year, the trustees projected that it would require an immediate increase in the payroll tax of nearly 2.8 percentage points, bringing the tax to 15.18 percent (shared by employers and employees), up from the current 12.4 percent; this year that estimate came down to 2.7 percent, bringing the required payroll tax rate to 15.1 percent.

The trustees also revised their near-term expectations. Last year's report, which was based on 2017 statistics, warned that the system would be paying out in benefits more than it took in starting in 2018. The shortfall was projected to be more than $1 billion of the annual program budget of about $1 trillion, and would mount steadily into the limitless future, unless changes were made in benefits or taxes. This year's report says the program actually was in the black last year, by more than $3 billion, and won't have to start drawing down its reserves until 2020.

The trustees are Treasury Secretary Steven T. Mnuchin, Labor Secretary R. Alexander Acosta, Health and Human Services Secretary Alex Azar, and acting Social Security Commissioner Nancy Berryhill, all of whom serve ex officio. Two seats for appointed public trustees are vacant.

We'll get to the main reason for the improvement in a moment. But the bottom line is positive. "This year's trustees report shows that, contrary to conservative propaganda, Social Security is not 'going bankrupt' or 'in peril,'" Max Richtman, head of the National Committee to Preserve Social Security and Medicare, said Monday after the report's release.

These are incremental improvements, to be sure. But they underscore an important point: Social Security's fiscal condition is dynamic. It's dependent on a host of interrelated economic and demographic factors, many of which are fundamentally unpredictable even a few years into the future, much less 16 years. Pundits who tell you they know what's going to happen are blowing smoke.

That's an argument for being very cautious about imposing irreversible costs on Social Security beneficiaries now in the name of protecting the program from expenses later. There's no legitimate rationale for cutting benefits today because the program might be unable to pay 100 percent of scheduled benefits in 2035; much better to wait and see.

On the other hand, there are legitimate reasons to expand Social Security to make it more relevant to and useful for today's working Americans. Two Democratic measures to do so are on the table in Congress. They're the Social Security 2100 Act, introduced by Rep. John B. Larson (D-Conn.), and the Social Security Expansion Act, filed by Sen. Bernie Sanders (I-Vt.), a candidate for president, and Rep. Peter A. DeFazio (D-Ore).

Both bills would strengthen Social Security by increasing the payroll tax on the wealthy, who get away with paying a unwarranted low tax rate. The payroll tax covers only wage income up to a cap ($132,900 this year); the bills would remove the cap over time; Larson's bill also would incrementally increase the tax rate.

Both would increase Social Security benefits, especially for lower-income workers. And they would enhance annual cost-of-living increases by tying them to an inflation index that better reflects the living costs experienced by seniors than the currently-used Consumer Price Index for urban workers.

That brings us to why the program's fiscal status improved. The chief reason is that disability claims and awards have fallen sharply, and more than anticipated. Consequently, the disability insurance trust fund's exhaustion date has been moved forward to 2052 from the 2032 date in last year's trustees' report.

The trustees observe that "disability applications have been declining steadily since 2010, and the total number of disabled-worker beneficiaries in current payment status has been falling since 2014." They've now incorporated those trends in their projections. That's a major recalculation, but the trend has been

See SURPRISE on Next Page

EDITORIAL POLICY Letters to the editor must include the NAME, VILLAGE ADDRESS, and CONTACT NUMBER of the contributor. Letters that do not have these information will immediately be trashed. Contributions consisting of 500 words or less have more chances of getting published. The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to publish a contribution or not; the right to edit submissions for length, accuracy, and clarity; and the right to publish and distribute contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats. Submissions may be sent via snail mail to the 2nd Floor, JP Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, 96950; fax (670) 235-3740; e-mail to editor@saipantribune.com; or through our website at www.saipantribune.com.

Potbus Chinatsaga

Sensian mehnalom ha sedi hit lumi`e asuntu antes de umasusede. Pot ihemplo: haf` na mampus silensiu i tanu`? Kau pot finattun pa`gu mafagpu` na kuaresma, figan somnag pat baratun suetdun popble?

Man-atotpe i tres pinadese ni lumuñu` kinalamten todu gi enteru petlas guine. Hu komprende i respetu kumu mañgilisyanu gi tiempun kuaresma piot i Bietnes Santu. I figan na klima tiempoña lau i baratu na suetdun popble, diskuidu!

Tat sentidu na gugat tiha hala huyuñg ginen kalaguag familia. Kastigu! Poresu na debi u guaha seriosu na estudiu haf` satbasioña este na chinatsaga. Didog na pinadese pumalolo`pu` familia siha gi señgsuñg, diariu.

Suetdu gi monedan familia umapapase obligasion guma`, kareta, neñkanu`, magagu, yan otru siha nesessidat. Debi u suffisiente kosake disiente kinalamten familia diariamente.

Guaha planun i mansabiun i hegsu` I Deni` umadelanta este na nesessidat familia gi enteru petlas guine?

Gai minakat i asuntu pot dañkulu na fondu ha nesessita yangin para u fan ma-hatsa pagamientun 15-mit na empleau ni gumagana suetdun popble pa`gu. Ti menus ke $650 miyon pesus ha nesessita este na gastu. Guaha fondu?

Ekonomia: I ineppen estudiau na ekonomista siha ilegniniha na gaige ginefsagan i tautau gi homlu` na ekonomia. Hafa ekonomiata yan kau magahet na homlu` pat nina`ye fotte na kalenturan taduñg chigu`?

Dichu kuestion ni debi kabisiyu siha (manma-elihe) uma-oppe manu i siña na chinadeg. Ti kinatsu nesessidat familia ni un` tinilada na "biba". Gaige i asuntu gi fuetsan monedan niha. Haf` mohon? Guaha fotmat planun miyu adelantun ekonomia?

Potbus: I Deni` kulan mohon guaha poduñg estreyas ni chumalapun potbus silensiu. Ni unu kalalamten! Ti mauleg man-maestotba sa` esta man-tutuhu` te`la niha gi mañgun kareta. Losus!

Dispues de lemlem tautau mañgahulu` gi karetan niha manmagap talu dos oras antes u fan hanau para iya siha. Esta nachaleg `an un` li`e matataka` i mañgu. Kastigun magap! Hmmm! Fotte na potbus estreyas!

Menus: Anog na maribaha dañkulu kontribusion aduana (tax) na sakan. Tumunog kase $18 miyon pesus segun i nina` halum gobietnu na moneda gi lehislatura. Puede ti man-dispetdisiau hit gi usun dididi` na fiñkas. Taya` kampu para diskuidu!

Dimas, muñga man-hinalañg ni ekun silensiu. Siempre adumididi` u buruka estake mattu tiempun ha`anen gupot siha deste mediu Nobiembre.

I klima ti maipe na "figan". Adahe, kontodu hagas hu huhuñgug mañganta na kokonitus man-mamatkilu! Man-atog! Figan!

Mientras tantus, namagof tali`e man-hagun tatte i troñku siha ni nina` fan dagñgas as Yutu. Naturat na rininueba! Esperansa!

NMD's: I Attikulu Dose ha limitte dueñun tanu` guine gi entalu` Chamoru yan Karolinas. Natibu solu siña dumueñun tanu`.

Felis pot respetu gi haf` dinisehan tautau tanu`. Tatnai mattu i asuntu gi kotte pot yinauyau disposision dueñu.

Lau i metgut na prinsipiu gi Attikulu Dose gaige gi direchun sudadanu dumueñun tanu`. Pot ihemplo, siña ti natibu hau lau sudadnon Amerikanu.

I direchomu` ti siña mañega kontodu direchun tanu`. Libre hau dumueñun tanu` Marianas kumu sudadanu`. Prinsipiun dueñu!

Este na prinsipiu u fofona ni achog u fattu gi kotten supremu giya Amerika. Mofo`na direchun sudadanu ke maintensiona gi papa` Attikulu Dose! Un` dia siña ha` guaha chumanda este na asuntu.

Peska: Antes, sessu tali`e mañunchulu, tekken, panag, yan talaya i tautauta siha gi tasin halum rubentason. Lau mas maribaha este na modun peska na tiempu. Kau pot esta mangefsaga hit ayudun food stamps?

Guaha rinibaha gi katdumin tiau, hitiñg, sesyun, satmuneti, mafute` yan tarakitiyun na ta abandona este na modun peska? Haf` na para ta sotta benefisiosu na eksisiu gi kutturata?

Hu sosoda` ginefsagag-hu `an huli`e tautau-ta man-peskan panag yan tekken. Namagof na patte gi kustumbren tanu`. I kineni` mapatte parehu gi haye mañaunau kontodu i bisinu siha gi señgsuñg. Estague` sustansian natibu i ina-ayuda. Namagof na kuttura!

By JOHN S. DELROSARIO JR.
Special to the Saipan Tribune

John DelRosario Jr. is a former publisher of the Saipan Tribune *and a former secretary of the Department of Public Lands. All views expressed by the author are his/her own and do not necessarily reflect the opinion and stance of the* Saipan Tribune.

Bendision: Diariu usun oxygen, wheelchair yan ayudu ginen asaguaña pot litiku i prohimu apmam na tiempu. Ha hassu tatte i brinabuña `nai sessu umapipet i dos mamokat gi kantun sadog.

Dispues humanau para i halum tanu` pot para uma-ekuñgug katen paluma siha gi ramas troñku. Gi biradan para i gima` sige man-adulalag yan famaguon niha. Magtus este `nai umenutet i prohimu.

Un` pupueñge gi katreña hafaisen maisague` haf` na para todu suetteña kulan mediu guaha taigue gi linala`ña. Dispues `nai ha repara na gi brinabuña todu pot guiya tat kumu famosu pot felis offisioña yan mikepble.

Taigue i Saina gi linala`ña dispues de todu bendision. Umachigu` ya mangagau dispensu. Ha faisen i Saina na para u ginachuñge masehague` inutetgue`. Pot primet biahe ha siente na kabales ha`aniña gi gumaigen i Saina gi fihoña diariu.

Para todu minagofña ilegña, "Ti bai tulaika i minagof-hu yan Sainahu pa`gu yan magof na pinekathu gi kantun sadog antes". Kontentu!

Land designation must be reconsidered

By STANLEY TORRES and JACK C. MUNA
SPECIAL TO THE SAIPAN TRIBUNE

The land designation made by the Department of Public Land to the Department of Community and Cultural Affairs for the construction of a Palau *bai* needs to be reconsidered. We know that the attorney general did not thoroughly review DPL's action.

The action taken raises very interesting administrative and constitutional arguments on interagency land use agreements. Even though it's short of a freehold conveyance through deed, a land use agreement (with conditional public purpose provision) cannot preserve DPL's fiduciary duty because DCCA does not have the same mission as DPL, and therefore lack fiduciary responsibility.

For instance, is the attorney general saying that DPL can transfer its fiduciary responsibility to DCCA? Truthfully, we are not lawyers but the idea of delegating land management responsibility from DPL to DCCA is suspect. Why not simply lease the land to a Palauan organization? Administratively, could DPL really approve the land designation and be completely absolved of any potential liability (that the public would expect DCCA to fully protect DPL)? The scheme is truly short-sighted and a contravention of the constitutional mandate of DPL to protect public lands.

The Legislature is not without authority to correct wrongs but seems like there is silence when votes seem to matter.

Article 11 permits freehold transfer to another government agency for a "public purpose." But it didn't define what it means. We presume it was left to the Legislature to determine the meaning, or maybe even the court, or through promulgation of DPL rules and regulations. We haven't come across a definition. After the dissolution of the MPLC, and successor agencies, the DPL was created in 2006 to manage and administer public lands, presumably in the public interest.

DPL was delegated specific programs to administer: homesteads, private land exchanges, among others. We didn't see any policy or anything regarding transfers on public lands from DPL to government agencies or autonomous public corporation. A transfer from DPL to a government agency land that is truly intended to be used by the agency for their delegated duties and responsibilities may be for public purpose. We would think that a "public purpose" may be for a park, school, or public facilities accessible to the public. As we understand it, a *bai* is limited to Palauan men; women and children and non-Palauans are not allowed. Wasn't there a case in Palau years ago where an American was beaten up trying to enter a *bai* during a meeting.

Our food for thought:

1. Is "public purpose" legally defined somewhere? Does the *bai* use fit the definition?

2. Is the law silent on "public purpose"? If so, is DPL delegated with the gap-filling authority to define "public purpose? Or, in the alternative, is DPL empowered to delegate land beyond the specific public purpose statutory programs, like homesteads, etc.? If yes, are there sufficient standards provided by the Legislature to guide DPL? Otherwise, if there is delegation but no standards, the Legislature would be abdicating its policy-making responsibilities to an administrative agency, which would constitute excessive delegation of legislative power. Where is the administrative restraint, Madam Secretary and also Mr. Attorney General? Contrary to separation of powers, we are witnessing a complete failure by our Legislature in monitoring agency actions. A resolution adopted in 2006 simply does not have any legal effect in 2018. Is it that difficult for the Legislature to adopt a new resolution? We need to make our Legislature accountable. Legislative review is paramount to avoid interagency arbitrary actions and decisions.

3. If the land designation exceeds DPL's authority, the designation would be ultra vires and a breach of fiduciary duty.

4. We think constitutional challenges do not require taxpayer standing to sue. NMI citizens should have the inherent right to contest what may be proven to be unconstitutional land transfers or designations that would injure the interest of the citizens. The people are guardians of the Constitution and public lands. The attorney general cannot close its eyes under pretense that he was not aware of it when the agreement was under review. If he was not and then he finds out, his utmost duty is to revisit the action taken and right the wrong. Mr. Attorney General, we voted for you. Therefore you must act to look into the matter and make known your position. You cannot be silent. Your legacy is going down the tubes if you don't act.

5. Although the DCCA is in possession of the land, that doesn't necessarily mean the land is for a public purpose for the benefit of the people.

6. Possession and the benefit that comes is not absolutely serving a public purpose; the presumption is always rebuttable.

7. Did the meeting resulting in the land designation comply with open government and transparency laws?

8. Was there a notice-and-comment public hearing before the land transfer was made?

Stanley Torres is a former member of the CNMI House of Representatives. Jack C. Muna is a private citizen.

SURPRISE

From Page 10

obvious to experts for years.

The reality hasn't stopped conservatives from demonizing the disability program, however. In 2017, Mick Mulvaney, President Trump's director of the Office of Management and Budget, took a totally uninformed swipe at disability recipients on the CBS news program "Face the Nation" while its host, John Dickerson, sat mutely by.

Mulvaney called disability the fastest-growing program, which was absolutely wrong—it was shrinking by then. But Mulvaney was in good Republican company. These attacks were abetted by inept and inaccurate reporting by NPR, the *Wall Street Journal*, and "Face the Nation's" sister CBS program, "60 Minutes," which all posited nefarious causes for the pre-2010 rise in disability cases—malingering by claimants, corruption by officials and overly tolerant standards—all of which either had an insignificant effect on the caseload or were just false.

FAITH

From Page 10

medicine was distrusted. Some ultra-Orthodox Jewish parents in the Brooklyn neighborhoods where measles has been reported also are reluctant to immunize their children.

Religious feelings about vaccination, however deeply felt, have no place in public-health policy, which quite rightly places faith in medicine, not divine intervention.

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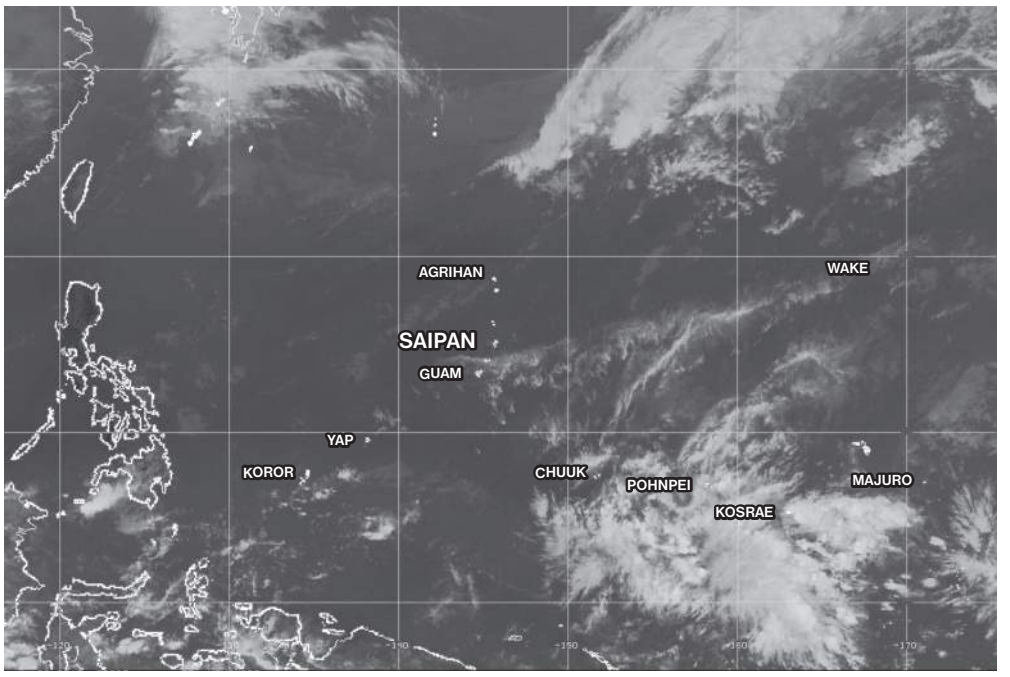
The Weather

5-DAY FORECAST FOR SAIPAN AND TINIAN

TODAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
Partly cloudy with a slight chance of light showers. East winds 10 to 20 mph.	Partly cloudy with isolated light showers. East winds 15 to 20 mph.	Partly cloudy with isolated light showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated light showers.
89º / 76º	89º / 76º	89º / 78º	89º / 78º	89º / 78º

YESTERDAY'S SATELLITE IMAGE



PICTURE TIME: 5:35 AM, TUESDAY, APRIL 23, 2019

Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

Moderate to fresh trade winds are expected the next several days. Combined seas of 5 to 6 feet are expected to build to between 6 and 7 feet Wednesday night.

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

MICRONESIA		▲ ▼ °F
Guam and Rota	Partly Cloudy	88° / 78°
Palau	Thunderstorms	87° / 78°
Yap	Thunderstorms	88° / 79°
Chuuk	Thunderstorms	86° / 81°
Pohnpei	Thunderstorms	85° / 79°
Kosrae	Thunderstorms	85° / 79°
Majuro	Mostly Cloudy	85° / 80°

AROUND THE GLOBE		▲ ▼ °F
Auckland	Partly Cloudy	68° / 59°
Beijing	Partly Cloudy	66° / 45°
Hong Kong	Mostly Sunny	82° / 75°
Honolulu	Partly Cloudy	84° / 71°
London	Showers	64° / 48°
Los Angeles	Sunny	79° / 58°
Manila	Partly Cloudy	100° / 79°
Melbourne	Mostly Sunny	72° / 55°
Miami	Mostly Sunny	80° / 72°
New York	Partly Cloudy	71° / 50°
Osaka	Rain	79° / 61°
Paris	Partly Cloudy	75° / 54°
Busan	Showers	64° / 54°
Rome	Partly Cloudy	79° / 57°
Salem	Partly Cloudy	84° / 59°
San Francisco	Sunny	64° / 52°
Seoul	Showers	64° / 46°
Tokyo	Rain	72° / 63°
Washington, DC	Partly Cloudy	76° / 54°

NMI CRIME STOPPERS

Anonymous tips can now be submitted through the following:

- Call 234-7272 (PARA) on any telephone
- *11 on any IT&E cellular phone
- Log on to the internet at www.nmicrimestoppers.net

TIDES: SAIPAN HARBOR TODAY		FEET
05:22 AM	LOW TIDE	1.13
10:01 AM	HIGH TIDE	1.73
5:32 PM	LOW TIDE	-0.12
-	-	-

DAY	SUNRISE	SUNSET
Today	5:57 AM	6:32 PM
Thursday	5:57 AM	6:33 PM
Friday	5:56 AM	6:33 PM
Saturday	5:56 AM	6:33 PM
Sunday	5:55 AM	6:33 PM

DAY	MOONRISE	MOONSET	MOONRISE
Today	-	9:46 AM	11:05 PM
Thursday	-	10:38 AM	11:56 PM
Friday	-	11:29 AM	-
Saturday	12:44 AM	12:20 PM	-
Sunday	1:28 AM	1:09 PM	-

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FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF APRIL 1, 2019

DEPARTURES

SAIPAN-GUAM (GUM)

UA117	9:15am	9:56am	Daily
UA105	6:25pm	7:05pm	2, 4

SAIPAN-BUSAN (PUS)

7C3451	3:10am	6:10am	1, 3, 5, 7
7C3451	3:30am	6:30am	4

SAIPAN-SEOUL (ICN)

TW308	1:35am	5:20am	2, 3, 4, 6, 7
OZ626	2:20am	6:00am	1
OZ626	2:50am	6:30am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7
7C3403	4:35am	8:25am	Daily
7C3401	4:30pm	8:25pm	Daily

SAIPAN-SHANGHAI (PVG)

3U8648	6:10am	8:50am	1, 4, 5, 7

SAIPAN-HANGZHOU (HGH)

JD396	7:30am	11:00am	1
JD396	4:50pm	7:55pm	4

SAIPAN-GUANGZHOU (CAN)

3U8646	4:30am	7:55am	2, 6

SAIPAN-BEIJING (PEK)

MU764	1:30am	6:35am	3, 5, 7

SAIPAN-MANILA (MNL)

UA117/183	9:15am	8:50pm	2, 5 via GUM
UA117/183	9:15am	9:10pm	1, 3, 4, 6, 7 via GUM
UA117/1939:15am		10:40pm	2, 5 via GUM-ROR

SAIPAN-HONG KONG (HKG)

HX077	1:50am	5:15am	1, 4
OZ626/721	2:20am	11:40am	1 via ICN
OZ626/721	2:50am	11:40am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN
UO43	5:35am	8:25am	1
UO43	5:50am	8:40am	3, 5, 7
UA117/159	9:15am	9:50pm	1, 3, 5, 6 via GUM

ARRIVALS

GUAM (GUM)-SAIPAN

UA174	7:30am	8:12am	Daily
UA104	4:50pm	5:31pm	2, 4

BUSAN (PUS)-SAIPAN

7C3452	9:05pm	2:10am+1	2, 4, 6, 7
7C3452	9:35pm	2:30am+1	3

SEOUL (ICN)-SAIPAN

7C3402	10:10am	3:30pm	Daily
TW307	7:00pm	12:35am+1	2, 3, 5, 6
TW307	7:05pm	12:35am+1	1
OZ625	7:40pm	1:10am+1	7
OZ625	8:15pm	1:45am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6
7C3404	10:10pm	3:40am+1	Daily

SHANGHAI (PVG)-SAIPAN

3U8647	10:20pm	4:50am+1	3, 4, 6, 7

HANGZHOU (HGH)-SAIPAN

JD395	8:05am	3:30pm	4
JD395	9:35pm	5:00am+1	7

GUANGZHOU (CAN)-SAIPAN

3U8645	7:55pm	2:40am+1	1, 5

BEIJING (PEK)-SAIPAN

MU763	3:55pm	12:30am+1	2, 4, 6

MANILA (MNL)-SAIPAN

UA192/174	9:45pm	8:12am+1	2, 5 via GUM-ROR
UA184/174	10:25pm	8:12am+1	1, 3, 4, 6, 7 via GUM
UA184/174	11:30pm	8:12am+1	2, 5 via GUM

HONG KONG (HKG)-SAIPAN

OZ722/625	1:10pm	1:10am+1	7 via ICN
OZ722/625	1:10pm	1:45am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via ICN
HX076	5:15pm	00:15am+1	3, 7
UO42	6:25pm	1:20am+1	7
UO42	9:25pm	4:20am+1	2, 4, 6
UA116/174	10:45pm	8:12am+1	1, 3, 5, 6 via GUM

LEGEND: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); 3U Sichuan Airlines, 7C Jeju Air, DL Delta Airlines, JD Beijing Capital, UO HK Express, HX HongKong Airlines, MU China Eastern, OZ Asiana Airlines, TW t'way Air, UA United Airlines, PR PAL Express; ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. *(The* Saipan Tribune *is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)*

STAR MARIANAS AIR, INC.

SAIPAN TO ROTA

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
1301	7:30AM	8:00AM	Daily
1302	11:30AM	12:00PM	Daily
1303	4:00PM	4:30PM	Daily

ROTA TO SAIPAN

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
3101	8:15AM	8:45AM	Daily
3102	1:45PM	2:15PM	Daily
3103	4:45PM	5:15PM	Daily

ROTA TO GUAM

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
3401	12:15PM	12:45PM	Daily

GUAM TO ROTA

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
4301	1:00PM	1:30PM	Daily

SAIPAN TO TINIAN

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
1201	7:00AM	7:15AM	Daily
1202	8:00AM	8:15AM	Daily
1203	9:00AM	9:15AM	Daily
1204	10:00AM	10:15AM	Daily
1205	11:00AM	11:15AM	Daily
1206	12:00PM	12:15PM	Daily
1207	1:00PM	1:15PM	Daily
1208	2:00PM	2:15PM	Daily
1209	3:00PM	3:15PM	Daily
1210	4:00PM	4:15PM	Daily
1211	5:00PM	5:15PM	Daily
1212	6:00PM	6:15PM	Daily

TINIAN TO SAIPAN

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
2102	7:30AM	7:45AM	Daily
2103	8:30AM	8:45AM	Daily
2104	9:30AM	9:45AM	Daily
2105	10:30AM	10:45AM	Daily
2106	11:30AM	11:45AM	Daily
2107	12:30PM	12:45PM	Daily
2108	1:30PM	1:45PM	Daily
2109	2:30PM	2:45PM	Daily
2110	3:30PM	3:45PM	Daily
2111	4:30PM	4:45PM	Daily
2112	5:30PM	5:45PM	Daily
2113	6:30PM	6:45PM	Daily

Business

Samsung delays folding phone launch after breaking issues

SAN FRANCISCO (AP)—Samsung is pushing back this week's planned public launch of its highly anticipated, $2000 folding phone after reports that reviewers' phones were breaking.

The company had been planning to release the Galaxy Fold on Friday, but instead it will now run more tests and announce a new launch date in the "coming weeks."

The delay is a setback for Samsung and for the smartphone market generally, which had been pinning some hopes on the folding phone to catalyze innovation in the industry. The Galaxy Fold, with its $1,980 price tag, was not intended to be a mass market hit, but many hoped it would hint at a new wave of smartphone advances—an area that has been lagging in recent years.

But device reviewers quickly found issue with the Galaxy Fold, which is about the size of an average smartphone when folded, and the size of a small tablet when its two sides are pulled apart.

Several journalists reported the inside screens flickering, freezing and finally dying on their test units within the first couple days. Two reviewers mistakenly removed an outer plastic layer that was meant to stay on and reported scratches on the screen afterward.

AP

The Samsung Galaxy Fold smartphone is seen during a media preview event in London, Tuesday April 16, 2019.

Samsung confirmed last week that the layer was meant to stay on. But that didn't explain why many reviewers saw the phone's inside screens break.

An early inspection showed there could be issues when pressure is put on the exposed areas of the hinges that open and close the phone, Samsung said in a statement announcing the launch delay Monday. It also found an issue where "substances found inside the device affected the display performance."

Samsung said it will to find ways to better protect the screens and explain to people that the outside protective layer must stay on.

Other test phones seemed to still be working well, and so far holding up to the Samsung pledge that the phone can be unfolded about 200,000 times in its life.

Medicare, Social Security face shaky fiscal futures

WASHINGTON (AP)—The financial condition of the government's bedrock retirement programs for middle- and working-class Americans remains shaky, with Medicare pointed toward insolvency by 2026, according to a report Monday by the government's overseers of Medicare and Social Security.

It paints a sobering picture of the programs, though it's relatively unchanged from last year's update. Social Security would become insolvent in 2035, one year later than previously estimated.

Both programs will need to eventually be addressed to avert automatic cuts should their trust funds run dry. Neither President Donald Trump nor Capitol Hill's warring factions has put political perilous cost curbs on their to-do list.

The report is the latest update of the government's troubled fiscal picture. It lands in a capital that has proven chronically unable to address it. Trump has declared benefit cuts to the nation's signature retirement programs off limits and many Democratic presidential candidates are calling for expanding Medicare benefits rather than addressing the program's worsening finances.

Many on both sides actually agree that it would be better for Washington to act sooner rather than later to shore up the programs rather than wait until they are on the brink of insolvency and have to weigh more drastic steps.

Limiting her comments to Medicare, White House press secretary Sarah Sanders said the report highlights the need for "serious-minded" lawmakers to work with the administration on bipartisan changes to lower costs, eliminate fraud and abuse, and preserve the program for future generations.

Sanders also took the opportunity to criticize Democrats' calls to expand Medicare. She claimed such a step would amount to a "total government takeover of health care" that would cut out private-sector options, endanger access to health care for seniors and further strain the federal budget.

But potential cuts such as curbing inflationary increases for Social Security, hiking payroll taxes or raising the Medicare retirement age are so politically freighted and toxic that Washington's power players are mostly ignoring the problem.

Arkansas Rep. Steve Womack, the senior Republican on the House Budget Committee, urged action, saying the financial condition of both programs is driving up federal spending, increasing budget deficits and crowing out other priorities.

"We cannot afford to ignore this reality any longer," Womack said.

Later this year, Social Security is expected to declare a 1.8% cost-of-living increase for 2020 based on current trends, program officials say.

Iran sanctions send oil prices, supply concerns higher

NEW YORK (AP)—The Trump administration's decision to impose sanctions on countries that buy Iranian oil is raising concerns about global crude supply and sending oil prices to their highest levels since October.

Industry experts said Monday that the sanctions could potentially remove up to 1.2 million barrels of oil per day from international markets. But that number will likely be lower, depending on how countries respond and just how much oil Iran continues to export.

President Donald Trump wants to eliminate all of Iran's revenue from oil exports, money he says funds destabilizing activity in the Middle East and elsewhere.

The announcement primarily impacts Iranian oil importers including China, India, Japan, South Korea and Turkey.

"It's difficult to imagine all exports being cut off, especially since China is still a major buyer of Iranian crude oil," said Jim Burkhard, vice president for oil markets at IHS Markit. "How China responds will go a long way to shape just how much Iranian exports are cut or not."

To make up for the Iranian losses, Saudi Arabia may increase production that the country had recently trimmed, but it "is going to use up all the spare capacity that they have, or pretty darn close to it, and that is going to leave markets feeling tight," said Shin Kim, head of supply and production analytics at S&P Global Platts.

Oil prices rose more than 2% Monday, helping to lift some energy stocks.

The price of gasoline in the U.S. was already rising and the development could raise prices further.

"We've seen that market tighten up considerably even before the Iranian news, and we're also seeing a number of refining issues in the U.S.," said Ryan Fitzmaurice, energy strategist at Rabobank.

Rising oil—and gasoline—prices can squeeze consumers, whose spending accounts for about 70% of U.S. economic output. "They can take a bite out of consumers' purchasing power," said Scott Hoyt, senior director at Moody's Analytics, where he follows consumer economics.

But unless energy prices surge considerably higher, a lot faster, Hoyt said he doesn't expect them to do much damage to the American economy. Employers are hiring, and the unemployment rate is near a five-decade low of 3.8%.

Rising prices are "coming at a time when consumers are relatively well positioned to handle it," he said. "Job growth is strong. Wage growth is healthy." And prices at the pump aren't even up much over the past year: The AAA reports that U.S. gasoline prices average $2.84 a gallon, compared to $2.76 a gallon a year ago.

STOCK PORTFOLIO

LEADING INDICATORS

S&P	DOW	NASDAQ
2,907.97	26,511.05	8,015.27
+2.94	-48.49	+17.21
+0.21%	-0.18%	+0.22%

EXCHANGE RATES

In U.S. dollar terms

Australian Dollar	1.40	Hong Kong Dollar	7.84	Russian Ruble	63.75
British Pound	0.77	Indian Rupee	69.11	Singapore Dollar	1.36
Canadian Dollar	6.59	Japanese Yen	111.91	South Korean Won	1,122.26
Chinese Yuan	6.59	Malaysian Ringgit	4.08	Swiss Franc	1.02
Euro	0.89	New Zealand Dollar	1.50	Taiwan Dollar	30.33
		Philippine Peso	51.01	Thailand Baht	31.86

Nation

Investigation ongoing, House subpoenas ex-White House lawyer

WASHINGTON (AP)—A House chairman subpoenaed former White House counsel Don McGahn as Democratic leaders moved to deepen their investigation of President Donald Trump while bottling up talk among their rank-and-file of impeaching him.

Judiciary Chairman Jerrold Nadler was one of six powerful committee leaders making their case on a conference call Monday with other House Democrats late in the day that they are effectively investigating Trump-related matters ranging from potential obstruction to his personal and business taxes.

House Speaker Nancy Pelosi urged divided Democrats to focus on fact-finding rather than the prospect of any impeachment proceedings after the damning details of special counsel Robert Mueller's report.

Nadler and the other chairmen made clear they believe Trump did obstruct justice, according to people on the call who weren't authorized to discuss it by name. McGahn would be a star witness for any such case because he refused Trump's demand to set Mueller's firing in motion, according to the report.

"The Special Counsel's report, even in redacted form, outlines substantial evidence that President Trump engaged in obstruction and other abuses," Nadler said in a statement released as the conference call got underway. "It now falls to Congress to determine for itself the full scope of the misconduct and to decide what steps to take in the exercise of our duties of oversight, legislation and constitutional accountability."

The subpoena angered Republicans even as it functioned as a reassurance to impatient Democrats.

Rep. Doug Collins of Georgia, the top Republican on the Judiciary panel, pointed out that McGahn sat for 30 hours of interviews with Mueller and said Nadler was asking for some items that he knows cannot be produced.

Trump himself insisted he wasn't worried.

"Not even a little bit," he said when asked Monday whether he was concerned about impeachment. However, his many tweets seeking to undermine the report's credibility indicate he is hardly shrugging it aside.

"Only high crimes and misdemeanors can lead to impeachment," he said Monday on Twitter. "There were no crimes by me (No Collusion, No Obstruction), so you can't impeach. It was the Democrats that committed the crimes, not your Republican President!"

On the other end of the scale, Pelosi's approach disappointed some Democrats who are agitating for impeachment proceedings. According to her spokesman, Rep. Val Demings of Florida said she believed the House has enough evidence to begin the process.

McGahn was a vital witness for Mueller, recounting the president's outrage over the investigation and his efforts to curtail it.

The former White House counsel described, for instance, being called at home by the president on the night of June 17, 2017, and directed to call the Justice Department and say that Mueller had conflicts of interest and should be removed. McGahn declined the command, "deciding that he would resign rather than trigger what he regarded as a potential Saturday Night Massacre," the Mueller report said.

Once that episode became public in the news media, the president demanded that McGahn dispute the reports and asked him why he had told Mueller about it and why he had taken notes of their conversations. McGahn refused to back down, the report said.

AP

In this Sept. 27, 2018, file photo, White House counsel Don McGahn listens as Supreme court nominee Brett Kavanaugh testifies before the Senate Judiciary Committee on Capitol Hill in Washington. Rep. Jerrold Nadler, the chairman of the House Judiciary Committee has subpoenaed McGahn for testimony following the release of the report from special counsel Robert Mueller.

Texas killer dies, leaving open questions about 11 slayings

NAVASOTA, Texas (AP)—A convicted murderer serving 70 years for a 1978 slaying near Houston who was also under investigation in the unsolved killings of 11 missing girls has died in a Texas prison.

Jeremy Desel, a spokesman for the Texas Department of Criminal Justice, said that inmate Edward Harold Bell, 79, collapsed Saturday at the Wallace Pack Unit in Navasota. The facility located about 60 miles (95 kilometers) northwest of Houston holds several elderly prisoners

"There did not appear to be any signs of foul play," Desel told The Associated Press on Monday.

Desel declined to discuss Bell's medical history, citing privacy laws. All in-custody deaths are investigated by the independent Office of Inspector General, according to Desel.

Bell's death leaves unanswered questions about the unsolved murders of 11 girls he claimed to have killed, the Houston Chronicle reported.

Bell was already serving time for killing Larry Dickens, an ex-Marine from Pasadena, when he admitted in 2011 to kidnapping and killing several girls who had disappeared from Galveston, Dickinson, Houston, Clear Lake and Alvin in the 1970s.

In one of several letters sent, Bell called the girls the "Eleven who went to Heaven." Bell acknowledged that he had also sent confession letters detailing several identical crimes to prosecutors in Galveston and Harris counties in 1998.

A few years after Bell made claims of being a serial killer, retired Galveston homicide detective Fred Paige and a Chronicle reporter collaborated to find evidence that he murdered the girls. The results of findings in that investigation were highlighted in a 2017 documentary on A&E called "The Eleven."

Galveston prosecutors then reopened the murder cases of Debbie Ackerman and Maria Johnson, the two island girls whose kidnapping and deaths Bell detailed in letters and interviews.

Bell was never charged with those two homicides, but he remained the key suspect until the time of his death. He also was the suspect in numerous other unresolved murders, but the departments spearheading the 11 cold cases could not find DNA evidence, nor were they able to locate weapons.

Rita Brestrup, who lost her sister Maria Johnson in 1971, said she had no words for Bell but was happy that he "no longer walks this earth and will never be paroled."

Bell was never prosecuted for any other murders besides Dickens, who was shot and killed after confronting Bell, a serial sex perpetrator who had exposed himself to a group of neighborhood girls.

Pasadena authorities subsequently arrested Bell and found murder weapons and pornography stashed in his pick-up truck. He made bail in Harris County and went on the run for 14 years.

After Bell was the subject of a 1992 Unsolved Mysteries episode, people provided tips which led to his arrest. The episode also featured Matthew McConaughey, who played Dickens in the actor's first TV role.

ACROSS THE NATION

Couple get 7 years in prison each for enslaving Guinean girl

FORT WORTH, Texas (AP)—A suburban Fort Worth couple has been sentenced to seven years in federal prison each for enslaving a Guinean woman for 16 years. A federal judge in Fort Worth, Texas, sentenced Mohamed Touré and Denise Cros-Touré each to two seven-year terms and one five-year term, all sentences to be served concurrently. The 58-year-old Southlake, Texas, couple must also serve three years of supervised released upon completion of their prison terms and pay their victim $288,000 in restitution. They also will be deported to Guinea. The couple and defense attorneys are exploring an appeal, said Scott Palmer, attorney for Cros-Touré. Trial evidence showed the Tourés brought the girl, then aged at least 5 years but perhaps as old as 13, from her rural Guinean village in 2000. They forced her to work without pay in their home as a housekeeper, cook and nanny until she fled and alerted authorities. The Tourés are the son and daughter-in-law of the late Guinean President Ahmed Sekou Touré, who helped lead Guinea to independence from French rule in 1958. Sekou Toure was the country's first president, a role he held until his death in 1984. The Tourés were convicted in January, and prosecutors had sought the full 20-year prison sentences allowed by law. However, U.S. District Judge Reed O'Conner tempered the sentence request.

Officials say 6 people died in Texas small plane crash

KERRVILLE, Texas (AP)—A man regularly volunteered to fly sick people in remote parts of the country to hospitals in Houston and Dallas was at the controls of a twin-engine airplane that crashed Monday in the Hill Country of central Texas, killing all six aboard. Jeffrey C. Weiss, 65, was a senior vice president for investments at Raymond James and Associates in Houston. The Texas Department of Public Safety said Weiss, who co-owned the Beechcraft BE58, was at the controls when the aircraft went down just before 9 a.m. Monday while approaching Kerrville Municipal Airport, about 70 miles (110 kilometers) northwest of San Antonio. Also killed were Stuart Roben Kensinger, 55; Angela Webb Kensinger, 54; Mark Damien Scioneaux, 58; Scott Reagan Miller, 55; and Marc Tellepsen, 45, all of Houston, said DPS Sgt. Orlando Moreno. The aircraft went down just before 9 a.m. as it approached an airport in Kerrville, a city about 70 miles (110 kilometers) northwest of San Antonio, according to Federal Aviation Administration spokesman Lynn Lunsford. State law enforcement officials secured the crash site ahead of FAA and National Transportation Safety Board investigators' arrival Monday. The aircraft had taken from an airport outside Houston earlier Monday and crashed about 6 miles (10 kilometers) northwest of Kerrville Municipal Airport, Lunsford said. The flight was not a scheduled commercial route, he said.

Asia

Quake kills at least 11, 24 missing in northern PH

PORAC, Philippines (AP)—Rescuers found more bodies overnight in the rubble of a supermarket that crashed down in a powerful earthquake that damaged buildings and an airport in the northern Philippines, raising the death toll to 11, officials said Tuesday.

The bodies of four victims were pulled from Chuzon Supermarket and three other villagers died due to collapsed house walls, said Mayor Condralito dela Cruz of Porac town in Pampanga province, north of Manila.

An Associated Press photographer saw seven people, including at least one dead, being pulled out by rescuers from the pile of concrete, twisted metal and wood overnight. Red Cross volunteers, army troops, police and villagers used four cranes, crow bars and sniffer dogs to look for the missing, some of whom were still yelling for help Monday night.

Authorities inserted a large orange tube into the rubble to blow in oxygen in the hope of helping people still pinned there to breathe. On Tuesday morning, rescuers pulled out a man alive, sparking cheers and applause.

"We're all very happy, many clapped their hands in relief because we're still finding survivors after several hours," Porac Councilor Maynard Lapid told The Associated Press by telephone from the scene, adding another victim was expected to be pulled out alive soon.

Pampanga Gov. Lilia Pineda said at least 10 people died in her province, including those who perished in hard-hit Porac town. The 6.1-magnitude quake damaged many houses, concrete roads, bridges, Roman Catholic churches and an international airport terminal at Clark Freeport, a former American air base, in Pampanga. Another child died in nearby Zambales province, officials said.

At least 24 people remained missing in the rice-growing agricultural region, mostly in the rubble of the collapsed supermarket in Porac, while 81 others were injured, according to the government's disaster-response agency.

The four-story building housing the supermarket crashed down when the quake shook Pampanga as well as several other provinces and the capital, Manila, on the main northern island of Luzon. The quake was caused by movement in a local fault at a depth of 12 kilometers (8 miles) near the northwestern town of Castillejos in Zambales province, said Renato Solidum, who heads the Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology.

More than 400 aftershocks have been recorded, mostly unfelt.

The U.S. Geological Survey's preliminary estimate is that more than 49 million people were exposed to some shaking from the earthquake, with more than 14 million people likely to feel moderate shaking or more.

Clark airport was closed temporarily because of damaged check-in counters, ceilings and parts of the departure area, airport official Jaime Melo said, adding that seven people were slightly injured and more than 100 flights were canceled.

In Manila, thousands of office workers dashed out of buildings in panic, some wearing hard hats, and residents ran out of houses as the ground shook. Many described the ground movement like sea waves.

One of the world's most disaster-prone countries, the Philippines has frequent earthquakes and volcanic eruptions because it lies on the so-called Pacific "Ring of Fire," a seismically active arc of volcanos and fault lines in the Pacific Basin.

AP

Rescuers carry an earthquake survivor after being pulled out from the rubble of a commercial building following a 6.1 magnitude earthquake in Porac township, Pampanga province, north of Manila, Philippines, Tuesday, April 23, 2019.

North Korea's Kim to meet Putin at crucial diplomatic moment

SEOUL, South Korea (AP)—North Korea confirmed Tuesday that leader Kim Jong Un will soon visit Russia to meet with President Vladimir Putin in a summit that comes at a crucial moment for tenuous diplomacy meant to rid the North of its nuclear arsenal.

North Korea has so far not gotten what it wants most from the recent flurry of high-level summitry between Kim and various world leaders—namely, relief from crushing international sanctions. There are fears that a recent North Korean weapon test and a series of jibes at Washington over deadlocked nuclear negotiations mean that Pyongyang may again return to the nuclear and long-range missile tests that had many in Asia fearing war in 2017.

The North's state-run Korean Central News Agency released a terse, two-sentence statement saying Kim "will soon pay a visit to the Russian Federation," and that he and Putin "will have talks." A date for the meeting was not released, and it wasn't clear if Kim would fly or take his armored train. There are some indications the meeting will be held this week in the far-eastern port of Vladivostok, not too far from Russia's border with the North.

The Kremlin said in a brief statement last week that Kim will visit Russia "in the second half of April," but gave no further details.

It's not clear how—or even if—Putin will push the stalled nuclear talks along, and the visit may have more to do with each nation's economic interests. Russia is interested in gaining broader access to North Korea's mineral resources, including rare metals. Pyongyang, for its part, covets Russia's electricity supplies and wants to attract Russian investment to modernize its dilapidated industrial plants, railways and other infrastructure.

Kim and President Donald Trump have had two summits, but the latest, in Vietnam in February, collapsed because North Korea wanted more sanctions relief than Washington was willing to give for the amount of disarmament offered by Pyongyang.

For a leader often perceived by foreign media as isolated, Kim has had a remarkable string of summits, meeting with the leaders and other senior officials of South Korea, China, Vietnam and Singapore. He has also sent his deputies to Washington and received Trump's lieutenants in Pyongyang as part of nuclear talks.

Sri Lanka arrests 40 suspects after bombings, toll up to 310

COLOMBO, Sri Lanka (AP)—As a state of emergency took effect Tuesday giving the Sri Lankan military war-time powers, police arrested 40 suspects, including the driver of a van allegedly used by suicide bombers involved in deadly Easter bombings and the owner of a house where some of them lived, officials said.

Sri Lanka's president gave the military a wider berth to detain and arrest suspects — powers that were used during the 26-year civil war but withdrawn when it ended in 2009.

The death toll from Sunday's attacks rose to 310, police spokesman Ruwan Gunasekara said.

On Tuesday, which President Maithripala Sirisena declared a day of mourning, Sri Lankan authorities planned to brief foreign diplomats and receive assistance from the FBI and other foreign intelligence-gathering agencies after officials disclosed Monday that warnings had been received weeks ago of the possibility of an attack by the radical Muslim group blamed for the bloodshed.

The six near-simultaneous attacks on three churches and three luxury hotels and three related blasts later Sunday were the South Asian island nation's deadliest violence in a decade. The government blocked most social media to curtail false information. Even after an overnight, nationwide curfew was lifted, the streets of central Colombo remained mostly deserted and shops closed as armed soldiers stood guard.

Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe said he feared the massacre could unleash instability and he vowed to "vest all necessary powers with the defense forces" to act against those responsible.

In an indication of the tensions, three explosions caused panic but apparently no injuries Monday as police were defusing bombs inside a van parked near one of the stricken churches. Dozens of detonators were discovered near Colombo's main bus depot, but officials declined to say whether they were linked to the attacks.

At Bandaranaike International Airport outside of Colombo early Tuesday morning, police walked explosive-sniffing dogs outside as inside cheery video advertisements of gamblers and snorkelers played. At a roadside checkpoint at the airport, security officials checked car trunks and questioned drivers.

The lack of social media access was contributing to the confusion and doing little to reassure residents and visitors that the danger had passed.

International intelligence agencies had warned that the little-known group, National Thowfeek Jamaath, was planning attacks, but word apparently didn't reach the prime minister's office until after the massacre, exposing the continuing political turmoil in the highest levels of the Sri Lankan government.

Health Minister Rajitha Senaratne said the warnings started April 4, the defense ministry wrote to the police chief with information that included the group's name and and police wrote April 11 to the heads of security of the judiciary and diplomatic security division.

World

Libyan force slows Tripoli push over concerns for civilians

TUNIS, Tunisia (AP)—A self-styled Libyan army slowed down its push on the country's capital over concerns for civilians caught up in the violence, as the U.N. refugee agency said Monday that the fighting for Tripoli has displaced more than 32,000 people.

Fighting erupted on April 5, pitting the self-styled Libyan National Army, led by commander Khalifa Hifter and aligned with a rival government in the east, against militias affiliated with Tripoli's U.N.-supported government.

The clashes threaten to ignite a new civil war in Libya on the scale of the 2011 uprising that toppled and killed longtime dictator Moammar Gadhafi.

The U.N. envoy for Libya, Ghassan Salame, said Monday that "divisions that prevail in the international community over the Libyan problem" are impeding efforts to impose a cease-fire. He spoke at a press conference following a meeting in Tunisia with the country's minister of foreign affairs.

Hifter has received aid from the United Arab Emirates, Egypt, Russia and France.

On Friday, President Donald Trump spoke with the Libyan commander by phone. A White House statement said "the two discussed a shared vision for Libya's transition to a stable, democratic political system."

The death toll from this month's fighting climbed to 264, including combatants and civilians, the World Health Organization said Monday. It said 1,266 people had been wounded.

Since launching his push, which many see as a power grab for Tripoli, Hifter's forces have captured the districts of Gharyan and Qasr Bani Ghashir along with several smaller towns. They also seized the capital's shuttered old airport.

Fighting is now underway for control of Ain Zara and Azizyia, two larger towns near Tripoli, and in the Abu Salim district, about 7 kilometers (4 miles) from Tripoli's center.

Abdelhadi Lahouij, the top diplomat for the east-based government, told The Associated Press in Tunis on Sunday that Hifter's push was slowed down because of concerns for civilians in the greater Tripoli area, estimated to number about 3 million.

If the civilians had not been taken into account, the battle would not have lasted even a week, he said.

"The army is today 20 kilometers (12.5 miles) from Tripoli. It controls the (old) airport and the bridge that connects the airport to the city center," Lahouij said.

He also lauded Trump's call to Hifter last week expressing U.S. support for the Libyan commander's perceived stance against terrorism and Hifter's role in "securing Libya's oil resources."

Trump's phone call was a step "in the right direction," Lahouij said.

AP

Abdelhadi al-Houij, Haftar's Minister of Foreign Affairs, speaks during an interview with The Associated Press, Sunday, April 21, 2019, in Tunis, Tunisia.

Kosovar returnees from Syria eager to leave shelter, go home

VRANIDOLL, Kosovo (AP)—Kosovo families waited Monday outside a shelter, trying to talk with relatives who have been repatriated from Syria and are eager to get home.

On Saturday, 110 Kosovar citizens—four alleged foreign fighters, 32 women and 74 children—were brought back home with the assistance of the United States.

The return of such a big group is a first for Europe. Experts say getting the families reintegrated into the society will be a hard challenge for Kosovo authorities and the families themselves.

Hidajete Delia waited for hours Monday morning to meet up with her sister Dafina, 23, and her sister's two little children at the camp in Vranidoll, 10 kilometers (6 miles) from Pristina, the capital. She says her sister calls the six years she spent in Syria "hell."

"When she was 17, my sister was deceived to go there. She has a daughter and a son," said Delia. "She is back and we are so happy. I do not know how to describe our happiness."

She would not discuss Dafina's husband, except to say that she knew he was killed.

Other people waiting at the main entrance to the camp were not ready to talk Monday.

The four alleged foreign fighters have been arrested and sent to a high-security prison. They are charged with joining war zone conflicts and are awaiting trial.

Authorities say the woman and children will be released from the camp in the next few days.

Inside the camp, which was guarded by special police forces, medical personnel were seen intensively working with the returnees, while groups of children played behind the wire fences. Nine of the children from Syria are orphans.

Prosecutors say so far they have charged 119 people from Kosovo for joining extremist groups in Syria and Iraq as foreign fighters, which means they could face up to 15 years in jail.

Justice Minister Abelard Tahiri, head of a task force handling the operation, has said authorities plan to rehabilitate and reintegrate the returnees into society. Tahiri says the government will "strongly continue to prevent and fight violent extremism and terrorism ... (and) not allow our citizens to turn into a threat to the Western world."

The U.S. embassy in Pristina has praised Kosovo's government for setting "an important example" in taking back its citizens from conflict zones.

Since 2012, more than 400 people have left Kosovo, a predominantly Muslim nation, to join extremist groups in Syria and Iraq, but authorities say no one has left in the past three years.

Authorities say there are still 87 Kosovar citizens in Syria: 30 men who are still actively supporting militant groups and 49 women and eight children related to them.

Will Ukrainian comedian be any match for Vladimir Putin?

KIEV, Ukraine (AP)—Volodymyr Zelenskiy's landslide victory in Ukraine's presidential election has thrust a comedian and political novice into the middle of the most dangerous flashpoint between Moscow and the West since the end of the Cold War.

Whether Zelenskiy is any match at all for Vladimir Putin, a canny and ruthless KGB veteran who has led Russia for nearly 20 years, remains to be seen.

Zelenskiy, who played an accidental president in a hugely popular sitcom but has no real political background, has vowed to keep Ukraine on its pro-Western course. At the same time, he has pledged to quickly reach out to Moscow to negotiate an end to the five years of fighting in Ukraine's industrial east against Russian-backed separatists, a conflict that has killed more than 13,000 people.

Arkady Moshes, an expert on Russia and Ukraine with the Finnish Institute of International Affairs, said the Kremlin may try to exploit Zelenskiy's lack of political experience.

Moscow "can on the one hand offer him something and basically outplay him diplomatically, and on the other hand threaten Zelenskiy as an inexperienced commander-in-chief with the destabilization of the situation in the east," he said.

With nearly all ballots counted in Sunday's election, the 41-year-old Zelenskiy won 73% of the vote to President Petro Poroshenko's 24%, reflecting disillusionment with the old elite amid economic woes, deep-seated corruption and the war.

Russia annexed Crimea in 2014 and has fomented the fighting in Ukraine's industrial heartland in a bid to maintain its influence in the country and keep the former Soviet state from joining the European Union and NATO. NATO doesn't welcome nations with unsettled territorial conflicts.

The question is whether Zelenskiy will have any more success than his predecessor in halting the hostilities.

"Everything will depend on Putin—whether the Kremlin will continue to use the conflict in the east to put the brakes on Kiev's movement toward the EU and NATO," said Volodymyr Fesenko, head of the Penta Center, a Kiev-based think tank.

Russia paid a steep price for its actions in Ukraine, with the U.S. and the EU responding with sanctions that have limited Moscow's access to global financial markets and restricted imports of key technologies. The Kremlin may now be eager to engage in talks with Zelenskiy in the hope that a lull in the fighting will pave the way for the lifting of Western restrictions.

On the campaign trail, Poroshenko warned over and over that Zelenskiy could be easy prey for the steely Russian leader. But Zelenskiy could also face powerful resistance at home.

A case in point: Zelenskiy has said he will push for implementation of the 2015 Minsk peace deal, the internationally brokered agreement that would enable Russia to maintain influence in Ukraine by allowing broad autonomy for the rebel east. But the Ukrainian public has made it clear it opposes any concessions to Russia.

"Any Ukrainian ruler's room for concessions in the Russian direction is very limited," Moshes said.

During the campaign, Zelenskiy said he would continue efforts to join the EU and NATO but emphasized that becoming part of the alliance should be approved by a nationwide referendum.

Zelenskiy, who comes from Ukraine's Russian-speaking east and spent years working in Moscow during his entertainment career, has many friends in Russia's artistic community who were excited by his election.

Russian Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev welcomed Zelenskiy's election, saying, "There is still a chance for Ukraine to improve its relations with Russia."

Zelenskiy has also pledged to try to integrate people in separatist-controlled areas into Ukraine—a promise that contrasted with the policy of Poroshenko, who made it extremely difficult for those living in the rebel regions to get pensions and other benefits.

In addition, he has vowed to seek a quick release of Ukrainian prisoners held by separatists and Ukrainian sailors seized by Russia during a naval incident in the Black Sea in November. "I will do all I can to bring our guys back home," he said.

Some observers speculated the Kremlin may release the sailors to create goodwill for future talks. Asked about that, Putin's spokesman Dmitry Peskov was noncommittal, saying the seamen have yet to face trial. They are accused of violating the Russian border, charges they deny.

Still, members of Zelenskiy's team were vague on how he will proceed in trying to negotiate peace in the east.

"There is no magic wand," Oleksandr Danylyuk, a former finance minister who worked as campaign adviser for Zelenskiy, told The Associated Press. "We will proceed step by step."

Along with the conflict with Russia, Zelenskiy will face a daunting challenge in trying to root out corruption and reverse a sharp plunge in living standards. While voters saw his lack of political experience as an advantage, observers warned that the reality could be different.

For one thing, Poroshenko's party and its allies control the parliament, making it difficult for Zelenskiy to form his team and pursue his own course.

"Zelenskiy's approach is naive and romantic," said Fesenko of the Penta Center, who predicted the president-elect will now face pressure from various political and business clans who will try to put their people on his team.

Focus

By LUIS ANDRES HENAO
ASSOCIATED PRESS

ARGENTINES return to Europe to escape economic uncertainty

AP

Tomas Ruiz pushes his suitcase as he is accompanied by his father Pablo at the International Airport Ministro Pistarini before boarding a plane to Ireland, in Ezeiza, Argentina, Thursday, April 4, 2019. Ruiz holds a European passport by descent, and is returning to the home country of his grandparents, far from Argentina's sizzling inflation, high unemployment and sharp currency depreciation.

BUENOS AIRES, Argentina (AP)— Tomas Ruiz embraced his father one last time at the Buenos Aires airport before he boarded a plane in search of a new life in Ireland. His sister recently did the same when she moved to Spain.

Like many other young Argentines, the siblings hold European passports by descent, and they are returning to the home countries of their grandparents — far from Argentina's sizzling inflation, high unemployment and sharp currency depreciation.

"My country's situation prompted me to take this decision," Ruiz said as he finished packing his bags for his trip to Dublin surrounded by photos of his family and friends on the wall. "It was a constant frustration to live constantly on the edge, barely making it to the end of the month."

Ruiz studied gastronomy and was employed as a cafe manager in Argentina's capital. But even when he worked extra shifts, he couldn't manage to save money, and for months he had been living with his mother to save on rent.

Outside his room, family members left him and his sister farewell messages on a chalkboard. "I love you and I'll miss you," his mother wrote. Others said: "The best is yet to come," and "Carpe diem," Latin for seize the day.

It's not the first time Argentines have sought shelter in Europe in times of economic uncertainty. Hundreds of thousands emigrated to the old continent to escape hyperinflation in the early 1990s and an economic meltdown in 2001 and 2002.

Now, Argentines are losing purchasing power to a nearly 50% annual inflation rate — one of the world's worst. Many have also protests President Mauricio Macri's decision to cut subsidies, leading to a spike in the costs of utilities and public transportation.

Last year, the Argentine peso lost more than half its value to the U.S. dollar following a run on the local currency, causing the government to seek a record $56 billion bailout loan with the International Monetary Fund to try to come out of the recession.

"As a result of the economic crisis and the devaluation, more young professionals are thinking about a future in Europe," said Alejandro Servide, director of professionals and recruitment process outsourcing at Argentina's branch of Randstad, the world's second-largest staffing company.

As part of the austerity measures aimed at balancing the budget, Macri's administration has laid off thousands of government workers and slashed funding for dance, science and other programs. Hundreds recently protested outside the headquarters of the National Scientific and Technical Research Council, Argentina's main agency for science and technology.

"The science sector is suffering because these budget cuts ordered by Macri endanger the continuity of scientific activity," said Alberto Kornblihtt, a molecular biologist. "This is undoubtedly contributing to a brain drain that we've suffered at other times (of crisis) in our country."

There are no official statistics available on how many Argentines have moved to Europe. Argentina's immigration directorate said it is nearly impossible to keep track of the number because Argentines leaving the country don't have to provide information on their destination or how long they'll stay.

AP

Tomas Ruiz hugs his father Pablo goodbye at the International Airport Ministro Pistarini before boarding a plane to Ireland, in Ezeiza, Argentina, Thursday, April 4, 2019. Tomas' sister recently did the same when she moved to Spain.

But academics, research groups and consulting firms agree there has been a rise in the number of people leaving, especially among young, educated Argentines — just as there was during the nation's worst crisis 17 years ago.

Back then, millions were plunged into poverty, more than 20 percent of the population became unemployed and many reportedly went hungry in a country that is one world's biggest producers of beef, soy and wheat.

"When Argentina goes through these profound crises, people search for options, and just like it happened in 2001-2002 when nearly 800,000 Argentines went abroad, today we're living through perhaps the initial phase," said Ariel Gonzalez, executive secretary of the Center for International Studies at the Catholic University of Argentina.

"That means that there's a sector of society — the middle and high class professionals — who are eyeing a Plan B, which is that if the crisis deepens, one of the options would be to go abroad."

Servide said Randstad Argentina carries out about 160 daily interviews for surveys. One of the questions they ask is whether if given the chance, they would be interested in living abroad. "About 80 percent tell you yes," he said.

Manuel Miglioranza, a 26-year-old lawyer, is moving next month to Toulouse, France. Although he doesn't have dual Argentine-French nationality, he's going to take French lessons and find a job through a temporary work permit allowed through a treaty between the two nations.

"The economic situation in Argentina is not helping. You can't progress unless you work for the state or you have dollars," he said. "I know many people who are leaving."

Millions of Europeans flooded into Argentina in the 19th century to escape war and poverty back home, which has been a source of pride for the country.

"Argentina gave peace to those who were escaping war, freedom to those escaping religious persecution, and bread and work to those escaping hunger," said Horacio Garcia, director of Argentina's National Migration Directorate.

"Of the last six presidents, four of them were first-generation sons of immigrants," Garcia noted. "Their fathers came to Argentina with a cardboard suitcase, and they saw that their children in a short amount of time became presidents of the nation. That hardly happens anywhere else in the world."

By the 20th century, a strong workforce along with export earnings from agricultural products and beef had helped turn Argentina into one of the wealthiest countries in the world.

Argentines were also among "the most Europeanized and educated people in Latin America," Gabriela Nouzeilles and Graciela Montaldo write in their anthology "The Argentina Reader: History, Culture and Politics."

"Their literacy rate (about 90 percent) was the highest by far. Until 1945, the country boasted the highest per capita income on the continent, the most extensive urbanization, the largest middle class, as well as the best newspapers, universities, and publishing houses."

But political mismanagement and lower prices for agricultural products that form the country's economic backbone have for decades led to cyclical booms and busts.

The Spanish government recently launched an initiative that allows a limited number of descendants of Spaniards living in Argentina without a Spanish passport to seek a special three-month work visa. Once they find a job, they can request Spanish nationality and bring their families. There were 76,328 Argentines officially registered by mid-2018 in Spain.

"There are many, many Argentines living here. We're like pigeons — everywhere," quipped Paz Pucheu, an Argentine now living in Spain.

The 25-year-old radio and television announcer went to Barcelona in 2017 when "things got really complicated" in Argentina. She began working at a restaurant and eventually landed a job at a local radio station.

"Like other Latin American countries, Argentina was a Spanish colony. With friends now we joke around that we're colonizing our colonizers," she said.

Good Housekeeping

ON GARDENING:

English dogwood
the ultimate spring extender

By NORMAN WINTER
TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

This time of the year as our native dogwoods and azaleas have completed their glorious spring display, something magical happens. At least it does in those old cottage gardens, seen in small towns and hamlets found on America's backroads. Today's young gardeners will see, and utter … is that a dogwood, where is that fragrance coming from.

The answer is that's an English dogwood and that fragrance is the mock orange which is also the other name of the plant. You are probably wondering how can this be, a shrubby dogwood with a fragrance that is almost hypnotic. Surely if there was such a plant it would be at every garden center in the country.

TNS
The mock orange variety Natchez proves to make quite a hedge.

TNS
This English dogwood or mock orange was seen in Brookhaven, Miss. and shows typical fountain habit.

Last year, about this time, I stopped at a small mom and pop garden center in LaGrange, Ga., I immediately knew it was something special as it looked like the headquarters for the rare and unusual. There were mountain laurels blooming and yes, a good selection of English dogwoods. The huge, fragrant blooms last for weeks and make it one of the showiest plants of mid to late spring. You bet your booty, The Garden Guy got one and it has already proven to be a treasure.

I am already guessing you are not familiar with this shrub, and asking please, please, what is it. Botanically speaking it is known as Philadelphus coronarius after an ancient Egyptian King in 283 BC. It's from Southern Europe and not a dogwood, nor is it related to the orange. There are other species and hybrids of Philadelphus such as Phildelphus x virginalis and even a native Phildelphus lewisii all with the mock orange name and worthy for the garden.

The taxonomic placement of this shrub has been a little fun to watch over the years. Forever it was listed as a member of the Saxifragaceae family giving it relatives like Astilbe, Bergenia, and Heuchera. Many still place it there. But now the taxonomic hierarchy has placed it in the Hydrangea family and this has been accepted by official government agencies.

Your real question is if this plant is so great and The Garden Guy loves it why is it not for sale everywhere? The answer is hard to figure. It is deciduous but so are hydrangeas and we love them. It can get gangly or a little unruly looking but a little pruning will keep that in check. Maintain plant structure by pruning oldest wood and excess basal shoots after the bloom. These basal shoots form a large clump that can be divided or separated in late winter. If the plant needs rejuvenation, cut to the ground after blooming. Lastly, it can reach 8-feet tall but that is no hill to climb, right?

The flowers, however, are as showy as the dogwood. They are 4-petaled, 5-petaled, double and semi-double usually measuring about 2-inches across. You can find them in single, semi-double and double forms. The blooms are produced by the hundreds, along arching stems that form a fountain-like appearance. And like the name suggests many have a fragrance as enticing as orange blossom. The English dogwood or mock oranges almost never lose their blooms to late spring freezes. It is cold hardy over a huge area from zones 4-9. It is a long-lived shrub suitable as specimen-type plantings in the shrub border and as screens or hedges. Another interesting feature of the plant is its exfoliating bark that reveals orange underneath.

Choose a site in your landscape, in full sun to partial shade, keep in mind the height will reach 5 to 8-feet. The soil needs to be moist but well drained. Generally speaking, they bloom after most azaleas but are ever so striking in landscapes with nearby Japanese maples. Satsuki azaleas and late season Encores pair up nicely as do several different irises meaning you can create quite a dazzling show.

To make sure you have one of the highly fragrant selections, you need to purchase mock orange while in bloom. Wait until you see them at your garden center in late spring. There are several hybrids known for enticing fragrance. Innocence, Avalanche, and Natchez are three of the better known. This will be a hunt for the proverbial 4-leaf clover but to me, well worth it, start your search.

TNS
This fragrant English Dogwood in Hamilton, Ga. shows the pristine white lighting up a filtered light area of the garden.

TNS
This English dogwood or mock orange was seen in Brookhaven, Miss. and shows typical fountain habit.

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Life & Style

Notre Dame fire was a warning bell. But will Europe listen?

In this file photo dated Monday, April 15, 2019, with the Eiffel Tower behind, left, flames and smoke rise from the blaze at Notre Dame Cathedral in Paris that destroyed its spire and its roof but spared its twin medieval bell towers, and prompted a frantic rescue effort to save its most precious artefacts. AP

PARIS (AP)—It's a thin line where the patina of age on Europe's countless monuments gives way to the onset of neglect. Like with so many loved ones, all is assumed to be fine, until suddenly it's not.

In the wake of the fire last week that gutted Notre Dame, questions are being raised about the state of thousands of other cathedrals, palaces and village spires that have turned France—as well as Italy, Britain and Spain—into open air museums of Western civilization.

If even an iconic building like Notre Dame could not be protected from devastation, if such a potent symbol of France had to scramble for maintenance funds, that lays bare a culture of apathy that can undermine a shared history as well as the multibillion-dollar tourism industry upon which much of Europe depends.

"We are so used to our outstanding cultural heritage in Europe that we tend to forget that it needs constant care and attention," Tibor Navracsics, the European Union's top culture official, told The Associated Press.

Some say the wake-up call, not just for Europe but the whole world, rang in Paris.

Sneska Quaedvlieg-Mihailovicis, head of the Europa Nostra heritage foundation, said it was "as if Notre Dame decided to set itself on fire to ring the alarm bell. As if she wanted to sacrifice herself for the cause."

Devastating fires have robbed mankind of its knowledge, art and treasures since the famed library of Alexandria in northern Egypt burned down in ancient times. Prior to Notre Dame, the last global warning came when Brazil's Museu Nacional in Rio de Janeiro, one of the most important cultural institutions in South America, burned down in September.

"Unfortunately, the fire in Notre Dame is just one of many examples," said Navracsics.

Experts look at the near-endless list of fires at historical sites in Europe and wonder why officials so often don't learn before it's too late. Data on such fires is limited, because monuments are so varied. Some were accidents, others arson.

"There are no exact statistics," said Didier Rykner of France's La Tribune de l'Art, but added that France sees "several fires every year in historic buildings, which is already way too much."

A 2015 study by the German engineering giant Siemens showed that Scotland had about 10 damaging fires a year, while England lost at least a dozen listed buildings a year. Germany has seen 70 such buildings destroyed since 2000.

"Every year, there's lightning or something else that destroys a tower or a roof," Juan Antonio Herráez, who is in charge of preventive conservation at Spain's Cultural Heritage institute, told the AP.

In 1985, the tower of Luxembourg's main cathedral caught fire and burned down. In 2004, a fire in the Duchess Anna Amalia library in Weimar, Germany, caused an estimated 80 million euros ($90 million) in damage. In Italy, the historic La Fenice opera house in Venice was destroyed by fire in 1996, and a year later, that happened at Turin's Sindone Chapel of the Holy Shroud.

And all too often, fires happen during restoration work.

The Glasgow School of Art's Mackintosh Building was gutted by fire last year for the second time in four years as it neared the end of a multimillion-pound (dollar) restoration project.

In Spain, the Gran Teatre del Liceu—Barcelona's opera house—was destroyed almost entirely in 1994 by a fire caused by spark that fell on a curtain during routine repair work.

Experts say what's lacking is the constant attention and regular maintenance that could help avoid the need for major restoration work, but that costs money. The problem has been exacerbated by the austerity budgets many European nations adopted after the 2008 financial crisis and during Europe's subsequent debt crisis.

After austerity cuts, Rykner said, "you need some drastic restorations that either you don't do, or you do them badly or cheaply. And it can lead to fires."

Herráez wants officials to shift their focus to prevention instead of only reacting to building disasters.

"Reparation or restoration should be seen as the failure in conservation," he said. "We would be spending money in maintenance but we will be minimizing potential future damages."

Navracsics echoed that thought.

"We should never forget that there's also a cost to non-action, a lack of maintenance or a lack of prevention," he said.

The problem is that prevention is practically invisible but grand restorations can be a boon for the politicians cutting the ribbons.

The fire at Notre Dame had barely been doused when two of France's richest men, rival billionaires, stepped up with flashy, competing donations of hundreds of millions of euros to rebuild the Paris cathedral. Notre Dame donations now stand at over 1 billion euros ($1.12 billion)—or about three years of France's national restoration budget.

This massive outpouring of donations grates on those who have begged for years for a few thousand euros to restore a local but valuable monument.

"You have seen that, now, the money is not the problem," said Quaedvlieg-Mihailovicis. "There is a lesson. Could we not invest smaller amounts, and not just for the biggest and the most iconic monuments?"

The EU itself has allotted 4.7 billion euros ($5.28 billion) for restorations in the 2014-2020 financial budget on top of what individual nations do.

As state funding dries up, governments are increasingly looking for private donors to renovate major monuments. In Italy in recent years, Tod's luxury shoes sponsored the Colosseum face-lift, while the Fendi fashion house helped the Trevi Fountain in Rome and Diesel backed improvements for the Rialto bridge in Venice.

"We do need to invest more, but this is a shared responsibility for governments, businesses and citizens across Europe," said Navracsics.

Nations will reap the benefits of such spending for years to come. Tourism in Britain and France alone amounts to about 7% of their Gross Domestic Product, good for around 150 billion euros and 170 billion euros (around $170 billion and $190 billion) a year.

Some say world-renowned monuments like Notre Dame are the driving force behind such tourism and deserve more respect.

"Cultural heritage is a gold mine. You cannot exploit it and then just leave the mine and go to another one. It is something you really have to cherish," said Quaedvlieg-Mihailovicis.

Game of Thrones: Co-CEOs may prove no match for ice zombies

AP
This image released by HBO shows Emilia Clarke and Kit Harington in a scene from "Game of Thrones," that aired Sunday, April 21, 2019.

WASHINGTON (AP)—Are two chief executives better than one? With Game of Thrones' Jon Snow revealing his royal lineage to his lover—and aunt—and potential rival Daenerys Targaryen during Sunday's episode, their beleaguered army at Winterfell is about to find out.

Daenerys is a Queen, among her many titles, and currently the only formal leader of the motley army preparing to face down the fearsome White Walkers. But Jon, who spent most of the show's seven seasons as the brooding illegitimate son of Ned Stark, reveals that his actual father was her older brother, Prince Rhaegar Targaryen. That gives Jon an arguably stronger claim to the Iron Throne than Daenerys.

His timing wasn't great: Their army will now enter an apocalyptic battle with two potential leaders. And Jon's sister Sansa Stark has exerted her own authority, making the leadership structure even more complicated.

In the Associated Press' weekly "Wealth of Westeros" series , we're following the HBO fantasy show's latest plot twists and analyzing the economic and business forces driving the story. This week, the conflicts over leadership at the top inspired us to ask: How have two (or more) leaders worked out in the business world?

The short answer: It's complicated.

To begin with, it hasn't been a very common arrangement. Barely 5% of the Fortune 500 have tried it over the past 30 years, including Oracle, Salesforce, Chipotle and Whole Foods.

There have been spectacular flame-outs, such as at Deutsche Bank, where both co-CEOs resigned at the same time in 2015. John Reed, the CEO of Citicorp in the late 1990s, was outmaneuvered and pushed aside by his co-chairman, Sanford Weill, after Citicorp merged with Travelers Group in 1998 to form Citigroup. Whole Foods co-CEO Walter Robb eventually stepped aside in 2016, to make room for co-founder John Mackey to take over as the sole CEO.

All those examples are considered failures, which may not be surprising, considering that most leadership roles are typically filled by one person, to avoid confusion and in-fighting. And the outsize ambition that is usually required to become a leader in the first place doesn't leave much room for humility and cooperation.

"My experience is that co-leadership doesn't work," Jeffrey Sonnenfeld, a management expert at Yale University, wrote earlier this month. "As a general rule, doling out chieftainships across an organization's upper echelons only serves to undermine and dilute the leadership role."

Still, co-CEOs have prospered in some cases. Mark Hurd and Safra Katz have been co-CEOs of software giant Oracle since 2014, a partnership that has benefited the company. Still, Oracle's founder, Larry Ellison, remains at the firm as executive chairman, an arrangement that suggests he may still be the ultimate authority.

And some research has sought to figure out when sharing power can work. A 2014 paper by Ryan Krause, a management professor at Texas Christian University, and two colleagues, studied 71 publicly traded firms led by co-CEOs. They found that the arrangement could increase a company's efficiency, but only if they were not actually sharing power. Instead, one partner had to be more powerful than the other.

"Otherwise, the firm risks becoming ... a two-headed monster," the authors wrote.

David Heenan, a visiting professor at Georgetown University who has studied leadership, has reached a similar conclusion.

"The most productive relationships ... are those of a leader and a chief ally," he wrote in the Harvard Business Review in 2013. "They may seem like buddies, even peers—but they remain committed to the principle of one-voice or single-command."

Assuming they all survive the zombie apocalypse, could John and Dany govern as equals, at least in public? If so, who would wield the real power, and who would be "chief ally"?

Daenerys Targaryen seems more interested in ruling alone: "All my life, I've known one goal: The Iron Throne," she told Sansa Stark.

And we know that there's no confusion about the White Walker chain of command: There's one Night King whose rule reigns supreme.

Swole, buzzy, among new words in Merriam-Webster dictionary

BOSTON (AP)—Get swole, prepare a bug-out bag, grab a go-cup and maybe you'll have a better chance of surviving the omnicide.

Translation: Hit the gym and bulk up, put a bunch of stuff essential for survival in an easy-to-carry bag, grab a drink for the road, and perhaps you'll live through a man-made disaster that could wipe out the human race.

Swole, bug-out bag, go-cup and omnicide are just a few of the 640 additions to Merriam-Webster's dictionary added Monday.

Deciding what gets included is a painstaking process involving the Springfield, Massachusetts-based company's roughly two dozen lexicographers, said Peter Sokolowski, Merriam-Webster's editor at large.

They scan online versions of newspapers, magazines, academic journals, books and even movie and television scripts until they detect what he calls "a critical mass" of usage that warrants inclusion.

The words are added to the online dictionary first, before some are later added to print updates of the company's popular Collegiate Dictionary, which according to company spokeswoman Meghan Lunghi, has sold more than 50 million copies since 1898, making it the "best-selling hardcover book after the Bible."

"So many people use our website as their principal dictionary and we want it to be current," Sokolowski said. "We want to be as useful as possible."

The latest additions include mostly new words, or phrases, but also some old words with new meanings or applications.

Take unplug and snowflake, for example. Unplug means to literally tug an electric plug from a wall socket, but now, it also has a more metaphorical meaning, as in to disconnect from social media, he said.

And yes, a snowflake is still a beautiful ice crystal that floats from the sky during winter, but it now also has a usually disparaging meaning of "someone who is overly sensitive," according to Merriam-Webster's definition.

Some of the words have been around for decades, but are included in the dictionary because of increased usage.

Omnicide, which means "the destruction of all life," dates to the Cold War and was used in reference to the threat of nuclear annihilation, but lately it has been used to define the risk of other man-made disasters, primarily climate change.

Popular culture —movies, TV and sports—is a common source of new words, such as buzzy, an adjective that literally means creating a buzz, such as a "buzzy new movie."

And then there's EGOT, a noun that refers to an entertainer who has won an Emmy, a Grammy, an Oscar and a Tony. Audrey Hepburn, Marvin Hamlisch, Mel Brooks and Whoopi Goldberg are among the elite group .

Garbage time, those painful final minutes of a game when one team has an insurmountable lead and both teams empty their benches, has been around since 1960, but is on the latest list of new words.

With the rapid advance of science, many new words come from the fields of technology and medicine.

In the internet age when it's sometimes difficult to determine whether the vast amounts of information we're exposed to is accurate, the dictionary is a rock, Sokolowski said.

"We need the dictionary more than ever now that we have information flying at us from all directions," he said.

'Thrones' is ending, but will live on in merchandise

NEW YORK (AP)—From wine to clothing to tours, HBO and retailers have cashed in through the years with "Game of Thrones" merchandise. "Thrones" is not only a huge international show but also a massive business, with all sides hoping to pad the bank during the show's eighth and final season.

"It's thousands of products, just a lot of stuff all around the world," said Jeff Peters, HBO's vice president of licensing and retail. "We're so busy we don't stop and count."

Products include makeup, beer, toy collectibles and even high fashion collaborations.

But while the show itself is a TV phenomenon, that doesn't guarantee fans will flock to stores.

"It's certainly good to be lucky. But you don't get to where the merchandising programs are with HBO and what they've done with 'Game of Thrones' unless you have a true, point-by-point marketing and merchandising and retail strategy," said product and licensing expert Tony Lisanti.

"This is a global property and every country may resonate a little different," he said.

California-based Vintage Wine Estates has been making the official "Game of Thrones" wine for three years now, said Pat Roney, the company's CEO. "Just the excitement all over the world with the calls that we get from almost 40 different countries to sell wine—it's just amazing," he said.

Popular tours of "Game of Thrones" filming locations in Croatia and Ireland have boosted small, local economies there, according to TripAdvisor's Andrew Aley.

"Some really positive examples like Northern Ireland, for example, where it's not somewhere that's always been on every tourist's radar and it's now become one of the major pillars of tourism in that local economy," he said. "But it's one of those factors that's then driving tourism to other attractions as well, like at Belfast Titanic or Giant's Causeway."

It wasn't always this easy for HBO to find retailing partners for "Game of Thrones," Peters said.

"At the beginning, nobody really knew what it was," he said. "So, we were the ones making phone calls and we were saying, 'Hey, you got to get in on this. We think there's a great opportunity.' As the show got established and got big, then all the calls came to us and people were just throwing ideas and pitches."

Some of those ideas resulted in fashion collaborations with companies like Adidas, who created the now hard-to-find "Adidas x Game of Thrones Ultra Boosts" shoes, as well as a collection with men's fashion designer John Varvatos.

Creating an eco-friendly nursery, from paint to fabrics

By MELISSA RAYWORTH
ASSOCIATED PRESS

When interior designer Jenny Dina Kirschner was designing a bedroom for her first baby, she wanted to create the healthiest possible space—for her baby and for the environment.

She began by choosing healthier paints, natural-fiber rugs and organic fabrics.

"Babies put everything in their mouths," Kirschner says. So her goal is "try to protect them as much as possible from exposure to those things that can be avoided."

Creating an eco-friendly nursery has gained new attention lately, since news reports have said Britain's Prince Harry and Meghan the Duchess of Sussex plan to paint the nursery for their soon-to-be-born royal baby with all-natural, vegan paint.

That's the general approach taken by Brooke Berrios, an early childhood education teacher, when her son was born six years ago. Berrios, an instructor at the Kremen School of Education and Human Development at California State University, Fresno, was familiar with research into the impact of toxins on children's brain development. She painted her son's nursery with non-VOC paint (paint that doesn't contain volatile compounds which give off gases) and bought organic cotton towels and bedding.

"I always get called hippie-dippie friend," she says. But "toxicity from the environment can have an impact."

What are the best ways to make sure your baby's nursery is healthy, and has as little negative impact on the environment as possible?

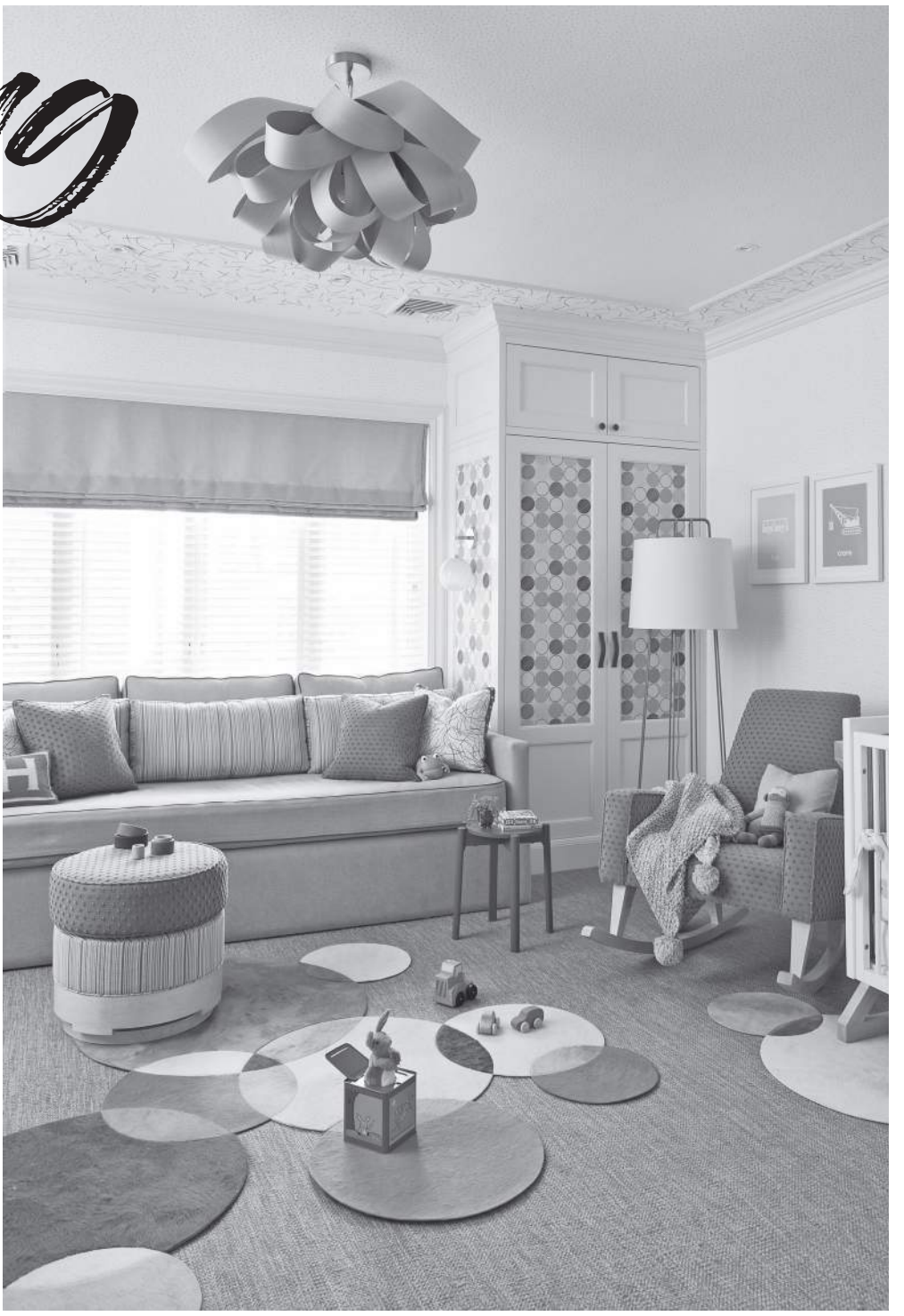
DO SOME RESEARCH

Some furniture upholstered with 100% natural fibers may have insides that include formaldehyde, flame retardants or other unhealthy chemicals, Kirschner says, so find out what's in them.

High-quality natural fiber rugs can actually last longer than some synthetics. And they can be left undyed, or colored with vegetable dyes.

Designer Paula Queen, founder of the children's decor line Lil' Pyar, suggests asking what dyes have been used on the rugs and fabrics you choose for a baby's room.

Also, ask where the items are being made and whether they will need to be shipped. Buying locally is the greenest option.



AP
This photo shows a nursery by interior designer Jenny Dina Kirschner.

BUY FOR THE LONG TERM

Interior designer and HGTV host Vern Yip advises parents to choose nursery items that can be used for decades—even generations—to come.

"Look at furniture that's going into your nursery as long-term furniture, things they can use for their lifetime," he says. "We didn't really buy pieces, with the exception of the crib, that were intended for a nursery."

For his children's nurseries, Yip chose dressers with a removable diaper-changing tray on top, rather than buying a dedicated changing table that his family would get rid of once the kids were out of diapers.

He also suggests looking at second-hand furniture and vintage items rather than buying something newly manufactured.

These designers also recommend choosing chairs or tables that could be used elsewhere in your home in the future.

And light the room for the long-term: Yip points out that we often leave lights on in a nursery, so choosing long-life LED bulbs is practical on two levels. Tired, busy parents don't have to change light bulbs as often, and LEDs waste far less energy than conventional bulbs.

Opt for items constructed from sustainably grown materials or made with environmental concerns in mind. Queen's firm makes small seating poufs from canvas fabric remnants left over from other manufacturing.

"We really use every element of material that we can," she says.

PEACE OF MIND

Kirschner points out that some new parents struggle to balance their desire for a healthy space with the convenience of synthetic fabrics and rugs that are easy to clean. Life with babies can be messy.

"I have a lot of clients with kids and babies, and they all want these synthetic textiles used everywhere, because they are so stain-resistant and virtually indestructible," Kirschner says. "As a designer, I have to warn them that these are not healthy."

Parents' peace of mind is an important consideration in choosing nursery decor, and eco-friendly choices can bring that, says Lauren Myers, a developmental psychologist at Lafayette College in Easton, Pennsylvania.

"What babies really need are people who love them and respond to them," Myers says. "And if a parent finds the baby's environment soothing and stress relieving, that is good for the parent. Too often we forget that what is good for the parent is also good for the baby."

Acupuncturist gets stuck with the dinner bill—twice

DEAR ABBY: I am a licensed acupuncturist. One of my patients (also male) asked me to dinner, and since he seemed like a decent guy, I decided to go. After we finished and the $60 bill arrived, he told me he had forgotten his wallet and I needed to pay, which I did. After dinner he took me back to his house to supposedly show me some recent renovations, and within 10 minutes he tried to kiss me. Fortunately for me, the date ended well enough.

He asked me out again the next week. I figured everyone deserves a second chance, so I said yes. Well, THIS time he took me to a more expensive restaurant and—guess what? He forgot his wallet again. This time it cost me $90. After dinner we went for a walk by the water and, when he tried to give me a hug, he knocked my only pair of glasses into the river.

I don't know if it was pre-planned or not, but because I had driven to his house, he knew I wouldn't be able to legally drive home without my glasses. This forced me to spend the night at his house. That I am able to retell this story means I survived that night, but what do you think? Does this guy sound like a loser or what?

STUCK WITH THE BILL

DEAR STUCK: "This guy" strikes me as irresponsible or a manipulator. At the very least he should reimburse you for the glasses.

I'm not sure if it's ethical for you to be dating a client. According to the National Certification Commission for Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine, the provider should not engage in sexual contact with a patient if the contact commences after the practitioner-patient relationship is established. Because you don't trust his motives, you should not see him again socially.

DEAR ABBY: I have been married for 28 years. Over the past three years, I have survived a cancer diagnosis and a serious car accident. Earlier this year, I found out my wife has been leading a double life. The doctor says it is because she's bipolar.

Over the past year, she has had five boyfriends, three online and two in person. None of what she posted online is repeatable as it is X-rated. It came to light after a checkup and blood tests that resulted in an STD diagnosis. Now my doctor wants to test me for HIV. HIV is permanent, no cure, but having it would destroy me.

I am still with my wife, but I have lost all respect. All I can think of is how I was betrayed and what little time I may have left. I don't have the money to seek help. Can you recommend some way to help me through this?

BETRAYED IN THE SOUTH

DEAR ABBY

By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Contact Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

DEAR BETRAYED: You have been through a lot, and I empathize with you. Have another talk with your doctor, and when you do, please allow him to test you. There have been major changes in the treatment of HIV since the 1980s, when it was an automatic death sentence. Many HIV-positive individuals now lead long, productive lives because they got tested and medicated, so please try to control your anxiety.

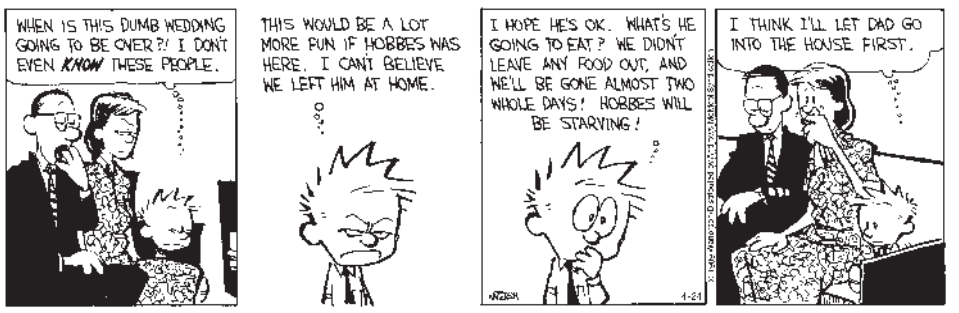
A final thought: If your wife refuses to get help for her mental illness, then you should consult a divorce lawyer.

Good advice for everyone – teens to seniors – is in "The Anger in All of Us and How to Deal With It." To order, send your name and mailing address, plus check or money order for $8 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby, Anger Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Shipping and handling are included in the price.)

Pastimes

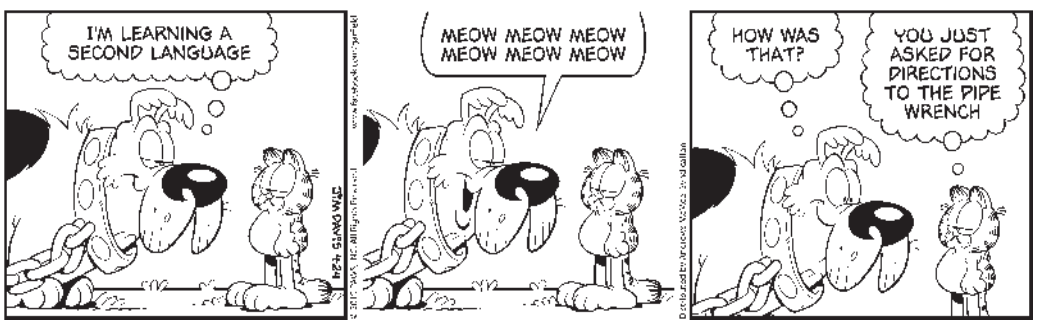
Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson


WHEN IS THIS DUMB WEDDING GOING TO BE OVER?! I DON'T EVEN KNOW THESE PEOPLE.
THIS WOULD BE A LOT MORE FUN IF HOBBES WAS HERE. I CAN'T BELIEVE WE LEFT HIM AT HOME.
I HOPE HE'S OK. WHAT'S HE GOING TO EAT? WE DIDN'T LEAVE ANY FOOD OUT, AND WE'LL BE GONE ALMOST TWO WHOLE DAYS! HOBBES WILL BE STARVING!
I THINK I'LL LET DAD GO INTO THE HOUSE FIRST.

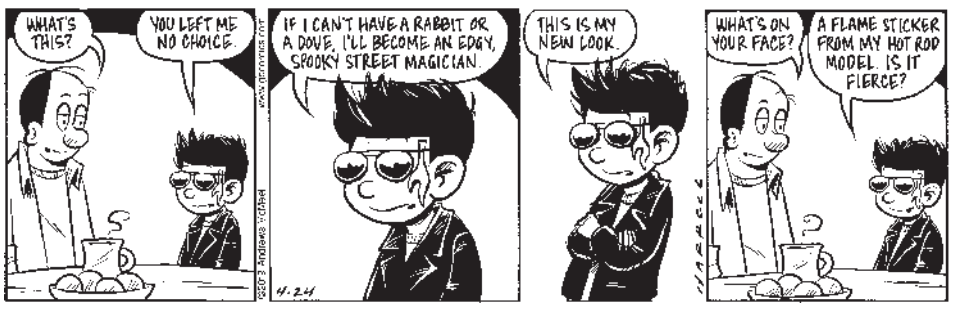
Garfield®

By Jim Davis



Adam@home

By Bryan Basset


WHAT'S THIS?
YOU LEFT ME NO CHOICE.
IF I CAN'T HAVE A RABBIT OR A DOVE, I'LL BECOME AN EDGY, SPOOKY STREET MAGICIAN.
THIS IS MY NEW LOOK.
WHAT'S ON YOUR FACE?
A FLAME STICKER FROM MY HOT ROD MODEL. IS IT FIERCE?

The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy

YOUR HONOR, I SHOULD BE JURY FOREMAN.
I HAVE A SPECIAL UNDERSTANDING OF THE JUSTICE SYSTEM.
THE DEFENDANT DESERVES A JURY OF HIS PEEPS.
PEEPS.
WHATEVER.

CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS

1 Church seat
4 Brit. record label
7 Singer Guthrie
8 Golf clubs
10 Vault intersection
11 Pig sounds
13 Good thing with a downside
16 Utter
17 Wear down
18 Half of CIV
19 Vivacity
20 Prescriptions, for short
21 "— were the days!"
23 Expire
25 Channel marker
26 Animation frames
27 Carte lead-in
28 Blood line?
30 Mimic
33 Confusing statements
36 Bit of buckshot
37 Makes a sweater
38 Prolonged attack
39 "Downton Abbey" role
40 Altar constellation
41 Eggy quaff

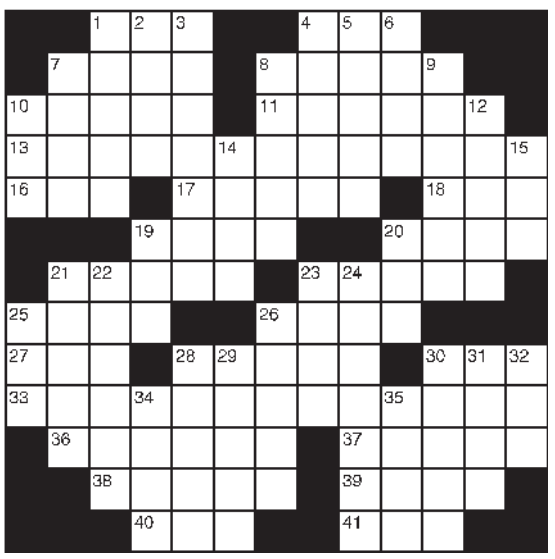
DOWN

1 Stand-in
2 Writer Wiesel
3 Is curious (about)
4 Goofed
5 Point-and-click gizmo
6 Hostels
7 Met solo
8 Dome home
9 "Jason Bourne" actress Julia
10 Baseball execs
12 Disparaging
14 Party cheese
15 USO audience
19 Lad
20 AWOL pursuers
21 Dutch bloom
22 Deceptions
23 Reply to "Shall we?"
24 Nome resident
25 "Kapow!"
26 Largest Greek isle
28 Grace of "Will & Grace"
29 Alpha's opposite
30 Getting on
31 Anti-fur org.
32 Curvy letter
34 Lamb alias
35 Part of A.D.

Solution time: 23 mins.

P	S	S	T	■	D	I	N	■	O	B	I	T
E	T	T	A	■	E	M	O	■	R	A	C	E
R	O	A	M	■	P	A	R	T	A	K	F	S
P	A	R	A	D	O	X	■	S	T	U	D	S
■	■	■	L	E	T	■	S	A	O	■	■	■
C	A	S	E	S	■	P	A	R	H	O	I	S
J	N	■	■	■	T	A	X	■	■	■	U	N	E
P	A	R	F	A	I	T	■	B	L	I	T	Z
■	■	■	I	D	S	■	R	A	A	■	■	■
A	M	■	N	O	■	P	A	R	D	O	N	S
P	A	R	A	S	O	L	S	■	D	R	A	T
E	C	O	L	■	E	E	K	■	=	C	I	O
R	E	N	E	■	D	A	S	■	R	A	S	P

Yesterday's answer 4-24



STUMPED? For answers to today's crossword, call **1-900-226-5955**! 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: David Boudia, 30; Kelly Clarkson, 37; Cedric the Entertainer, 55; Barbra Streisand, 77.

Happy Birthday: Share your adventures, thoughts and plans with the people you love. Turn this into a productive year personally and professionally. Mix business with pleasure, and bring unity and stabilization into focus. Fine-tune your life to encourage less stress and more progress. Plan trips or educational pursuits that will be enlightening and push you in a positive direction. Your numbers are 4, 12, 20, 24, 33, 38, 45.

ARIES *(March 21-April 19):* Don't let emotional matters interfere with your progress. Separate your personal life from your professional, and channel pent-up energy into something constructive. A financial gain is possible if you negotiate on your own behalf. ✪✪

TAURUS *(April 20-May 20):* Set a pace you can handle. Don't feel pressured to make a change that you aren't ready to make. Sort through what's happened in the past, and eliminate anything you think might stand in your way or ruin your day. ✪✪✪✪✪

GEMINI *(May 21-June 20):* Exaggerating will get you into trouble. Stick to the truth, and be transparent regarding your intentions. Charm alone will not be enough to convince others to believe you or follow your example. Legal and health matters will need to be handled with accuracy. ✪✪✪

CANCER *(June 21-July 22):* An emotional conversation with a personal or professional partner will result in an unexpected but beneficial change. Let what transpires run its course, and you will come out on top. Experience will help you move forward without looking back. ✪✪✪

LEO *(July 23-Aug. 22):* Let what others do be your guide. What you learn through observation and asking questions will help you avoid getting involved in someone else's drama. Don't gossip or give others insight into your thoughts and feelings. ✪✪✪

VIRGO *(Aug. 23-Sept. 22):* How you deal with change will make a difference to the way others perceive you. An honest assessment and approach will get the best response from those you want to attract, and it will discourage those you want to avoid. ✪✪✪✪✪

LIBRA *(Sept. 23-Oct. 22):* No one is perfect, so before you take on a dispute that can damage an important relationship, consider alternative ways to handle the situation. Using compliments to offset criticism will help you avoid a rift or alienation. ✪✪

SCORPIO *(Oct. 23-Nov. 21):* An encounter you experience or information you are given will change your attitude regarding your health and how fit you are. Take a quiz that will help you figure out the best way to make physical, emotional and mental improvements. ✪✪✪

SAGITTARIUS *(Nov. 22-Dec. 21):* The changes you make at home or to the way you live or handle important relationships will get you moving in a better direction. Facing facts and making positive adjustments will ease stress. Romance is in the stars. ✪✪✪

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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CAPRICORN *(Dec. 22-Jan. 19):* Do what you can to improve your living arrangements. An innovative change will help you cut costs, giving you greater financial freedom. Handle your investments personally. Don't pay for someone else's mistake. Take better care of your health. ✪✪✪

AQUARIUS *(Jan. 20-Feb. 18):* Moderation will be required if you intend to stick to your fitness goals. Exercise and proper diet should not be foregone because you are tempted to indulge with your bestie. Set an example instead of giving in to an indulgent request. ✪✪✪

PISCES *(Feb. 19-March 20):* Make positive changes that will help you up your qualifications or improve your reputation. Refuse to get involved in someone else's battle or to believe everything you are told. Avoid conflict, excess and offering a false impression. ✪✪✪✪

Birthday Baby: You are excitable, caring and industrious. You are stylish and proactive.

To submit astrological questions to the "Dear Eugenia" column, visit Eugenialast.com, or join Eugenia on Twitter/Facebook/LinkedIn.

SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku *By Dave Green*

						9
		1	4		5	7
	3			7		2
	2	4	6		5	
7				8	9	
	9	1	3		6		2
	4		2		7		3
		5			1	4		6
					2	9	

Difficulty Level ★★★ 4/24

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Yesterday's Answer

3	7	8	4	9	1	2	5	6
2	9	5	6	7	3	8	4	1
1	6	4	2	5	8	9	3	7
5	4	1	8	2	9	6	7	3
7	3	9	5	1	6	4	8	2
6	8	2	7	3	4	1	9	5
8	2	7	1	4	5	3	6	9
9	5	6	3	8	2	7	1	4
4	1	3	9	6	7	5	2	8

Difficulty Level ★★

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WONDERWORD®

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally and even backward. Find them, circle each letter of the word and strike it off the list. The leftover letters spell the **WONDERWORD.**

REMEMBERING HIPPIES **Solution: 9 letters**

W	P	S	Y	C	H	E	D	E	L	I	C	O	L
S	T	A	E	B	O	L	E	K	N	U	F	R	A	G
E	S	N	O	J	O	P	L	I	N	O	N	N	(E)	L
L	H	F	G	R	E	E	N	W	I	C	H	D	(E)	M
T	I	R	Y	E	L	E	K	R	E	B	N	S	(R)	A
A	R	A	V	I	L	L	A	G	E	H	T	C	(F)	R
E	T	N	A	S	T	R	O	L	O	G	Y	I	O	C
B	N	C	A	U	S	E	L	J	D	R	E	S	S	H
S	E	I	D	N	A	B	D	C	U	L	T	U	R	E
E	M	S	K	C	O	R	E	C	A	E	P	M	I	S
I	E	C	S	T	R	A	Y	J	A	N	I	S	A	Y
T	V	O	T	B	O	B	D	Y	L	A	N	C	H	M
X	O	O	F	L	O	W	E	R	C	H	I	L	D	B
I	M	R	E	T	S	P	I	H	A	P	P	Y	K	O
S	I	M	O	N	O	I	T	U	L	O	V	E	R	L

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Arts, Astrology, Band, Beatles, Beats, Bell-bottoms, Berkeley, Bob Dylan, Cause, Cool, Culture, Dress, Flower Child, Free, Garfunkel, Greenwich, Hair, Happy, Hipster, Janis, John, Joplin, Lennon, Marches, Movement, Music, Peace, Psychedelic, Revolution, Rock, San Francisco, Simon, Sixties, Symbol, Tie-dyed, T-shirt, Village

Yesterday's Answer: Fashion

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ITB NO.: ITB19-BECQ-081

SUBMISSION DATE: MAY 24, 2019 TIME: 10:30 A.M.

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/S/ ELI D. CABRERA
ADMINISTRATOR, BECQ

/S/ JOAQUIN S. REYES
ACTING DIRECTOR, P&S

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CNMI GOVERNMENT
INVITATION TO BID
ITB NO.: ITB19-CIP/OPD-079

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Harper angrily confronts umpire, Mets top Phillies

AP
Philadelphia Phillies' Bryce Harper, left, is restrained while arguing with umpire Mark Carlson, right, during the fourth inning of a baseball game against the New York Mets, Monday, April 22, 2019, in New York.

NEW YORK (AP)—Muttering on his way back to the dugout, it was clear Bryce Harper was miffed.

Moments later, the fans who had been heckling him at Citi Field saw just how mad he really was.

Harper bolted from the bench , wildly pointing and yelling while confronting the plate umpire after being ejected, and it took three Philadelphia Phillies to harness the enraged slugger Monday night in a 5-1 loss to the New York Mets.

"I'm usually zero to 100, anyway," Harper said of his sudden eruption. "Calm, then bam!"

"I guess I overstepped," he said later, softly and without expression.

The game started 1 1/2 hours late because of rain. But the wet weather certainly didn't dampen emotions as Harper became the first Phillies player ejected since pitcher Justin De Fratus in 2015.

Harper struck out swinging his first time up, then was called out on strikes by Mark Carlson to begin the fourth. By then, it was obvious he wasn't happy with Carlson's zone.

Four batters later, Harper was in the dugout when he was tossed. Phillies manager Gabe Kapler quickly came out to argue, then Harper followed in a much bigger hurry.

"He made some comments in the dugout that were inappropriate that caused his ejection," Carlson told a pool reporter, adding the language Harper used was "personal."

Once he arrived on the scene, Harper screamed and waved his arms over and over from close range at Carlson, a 20-year umpire. Kapler kept trying to push away his star player from the ump.

Bench coach Rob Thomson soon wrapped up Harper and third base coach Dusty Wathan blocked his path to the plate. Kapler continued the argument as Harper made his way back to the bench and clubhouse.

Carlson said he thought there was physical contact during the dispute, saying, "It was from, in my opinion, Bryce bumping Gabe into me."

Was it incidental or intentional?

"That decision will be made by Major League Baseball after watching the video," crew chief Brian Gorman said.

Carlson said Harper was upset about a called strike in his first at-bat and mentioned it the next time he came up against Mets lefty Steven Matz.

"He made a comment when he was in the batter's box and then he made a comment as he left the batter's box after he struck out," he said.

Kapler adamantly said he didn't think Harper should've been ejected.

"Normal chirping from the dugout," he said. "I don't know how he was selected."

Arrieta and Kapler both said they thought there were some missed balls-and-strikes call. But Arrieta also called out his teammates.

"I don't think our guys were ready to play," Arrieta said.

As for Harper, "we need him out there," the pitcher said. "I need him in right field and at the plate, and he wasn't there."

Said Harper: "It just can't happen."

"I got to stay in," he said.

This was Harper's 12th career ejection, according to retrosheet.org.

Rays 6, Royals 3

In Florida, Mike Zunino returned from the paternity list and hit his first home run for Tampa Bay, a two-run shot that helped the Rays stop a season-high four-game skid with a victory over the Kansas City Royals.

Yandy Diaz, Brandon Lowe and Daniel Robertson also drove in runs for the AL East leaders, who scored three times in the seventh to come from behind against Brad Keller (2-2). It's the ninth time this season the Royals have lost after holding a lead in the sixth inning or beyond.

Pitching while appealing a five-game suspension for his role in a benches-clearing fracas with the Chicago White Sox last week, Keller held the Rays in check until giving up Robertson's tying RBI grounder and Zunino's homer to straight away center in the seventh.

White Sox 12, Orioles 2

In Baltimore, José Abreu homered and drove in five runs, James McCann had a homer and four RBIs and Chicago White Sox beat the bumbling Baltimore Orioles.

McCann's three-run drive off David Hess (1-4) highlighted a four-run fifth inning, and Abreu's shot with a man on sparked a four-run seventh against Tanner Scott.

Abreu also had an RBI single in the fifth and singled in two runs during a four-run eighth.

The rebuilding Orioles have lost four straight, fell to 1-10 at home and drew just 8,555—their fifth time under 10,000 at Camden Yards this season.

Diamondbacks 12, Pirates 4

In Pittsburgh, Pirates reliever Nick Burdi left in tears with a right arm injury, a chilling low point for Pittsburgh loss to the Arizona Diamondbacks.

Burdi, who had Tommy John surgery in 2017, had already given up five runs in a third of an inning when he fired a 96 mph fastball to Jarrod Dyson. The 26-year-old Burdi shrugged his right arm after releasing the pitch then crumpled to the ground. Surrounded by teammates, a trainer and manager Clint Hurdle, Burdi sobbed on the mound before standing and walking off holding his arm.

The team said Burdi was dealing with pain in his biceps and right elbow. Formerly a top prospect with the Twins, Burdi had struck out 17 over 8 1/3 innings prior to Monday in a promising start to the season.

Cardinals 13, Brewers 5

In St. Louis, Dexter Fowler had four-hit game in six years, hitting his first home run this season and driving in four runs to lead the St. Louis Cardinals over the Milwaukee Brewers.

Paul Goldschmidt hit his ninth home run and had three hits and three RBIs for the Cardinals. St. Louis outhit Milwaukee 18-5, set a season high for runs and won its third straight.

Fowler had the fifth four-hit game of his career, his first since June 9, 2013, against San Diego.

Rockies 7, Nationals 5

In Denver, No. 1,000 was nothing new for Nolan Arenado.

Arenado hit a tiebreaking homer for his 1,000th career hit and the Colorado Rockies rallied to beat the Washington Nationals 7-5 Monday night.

Arenado also doubled twice and drove in two to help the Rockies win for the seventh time in eight games. He is the ninth Rockies player to reach 1,000 hits, getting there with a solo shot off Wander Suero (1-2) in the seventh to make it 6-5.

"I'm just thankful I was able to put the team ahead there and have a good quality at bat against a guy throwing hard and throwing really good cutters," Arenado said. "I just tried to hit the ball hard there."

Twins 9, Astros 5

In Houston, after Jorge Polanco's start to the season, Twins manager Rocco Baldelli is running out of things to say about his young shortstop.

Polanco had four hits, including a two-run homer, and drove in four runs to lead Minnesota to its fourth straight win over the Houston Astros on Monday night.

"We talk about him being hot, yeah he's swinging the bat well, but it's the quality of his (at-bats)," Baldelli said. "We talk about it every day before the game and every day after the game. He gives himself an opportunity because he swings at good pitches and he finds a way to get the barrel on the ball on a very consistent basis."

Polanco is hitting .392. Three of his hits and all of his RBIs Monday came with two outs.

Seahawks know speculation about Clark will swirl until draft

RENTON, Wash. (AP)—Seahawks general manager John Schneider knows there is going to be speculation about Frank Clark's future at least until the first round of the NFL draft on Thursday since the defensive end would seem to be the most viable trade commodity that could land Seattle the draft picks it covets.

"This time, and the trade deadline, there's some speculation about a lot of players. We're involved in a lot of deals. We take a lot of pride in that. We wouldn't be doing our jobs if we weren't listening to everybody," Schneider said Monday.

"I get it, people need to speculate this time of year. Watched something this morning where everybody figured it out for us. We take a lot of pride in having relationships through the league and understanding what's going on as much as we possibly can."

Seattle resolved one long-term issue last week when it signed quarterback Russell Wilson to an extension that made him the highest-paid player in football and would keep him with the Seahawks through 2023. But the deal may also have priced Seattle out of keeping Clark, who is set to play the upcoming season on the franchise tag after the sides were unable to come to agreement on a long-term deal. Clark will make $17.1 million if he signs his franchise tag tender.

Keeping Clark around also becomes more difficult because Seattle needs to try to sign defensive tackle Jarran Reed and All-Pro linebacker Bobby Wagner to extensions. "Feasible, very challenging," Schneider said when asked about getting long-term deals done for all three.

Seattle's meager supply of picks is a big reason Clark's future is such a big topic, however. The Seahawks have only four picks and have no selections in the second, sixth and seventh rounds.

Giannis scores 41, leads Bucks to sweep of Detroit

AP
Milwaukee Bucks forward Giannis Antetokounmpo (34) is defended by Detroit Pistons forward Blake Griffin (23) during the first half of Game 4 of a first-round NBA basketball playoff series, Monday, April 22, 2019, in Detroit.

DETROIT (AP)—Giannis Antetokounmpo scored 41 points, and the Milwaukee Bucks beat Detroit 127-104 on Monday night, completing a four-game sweep of the Pistons and advancing to the second round of the playoffs for the first time since 2001.

Milwaukee closed the third quarter with a 17-3 run, taking a 10-point lead into the fourth after the Pistons had led much of the way. Detroit set an NBA record with its 14th consecutive playoff loss, a skid that began in 2008.

The Bucks will face Boston in the second round. The Celtics are coming off a sweep of their own against Indiana.

"I think it's important that we take a second tonight. Enjoy it," Bucks coach Mike Budenholzer said. "It's a good night for Milwaukee. It's a good night for the Bucks."

Reggie Jackson scored 20 of his 26 points in the first half for Detroit. Blake Griffin fouled out with 7:06 remaining after scoring 22. The home fans gave him a nice ovation—then many headed for the exits. Griffin missed the first two games of the series with knee problems.

"Blake played his heart out with basically one leg," said Pistons coach Dwane Casey, whose voice was hoarse at his postgame news conference. "He fought through a lot of pain, swelling."

Griffin was on the bench for much of Milwaukee's crucial run. He sat for the final 4:35 of the third. Antetokounmpo scored 16 points in that quarter, half of which came on free throws.

Detroit led 20-8 early on after a dunk by Griffin. The Pistons were up 62-56 at halftime but still couldn't prevent a fourth straight blowout at the hands of the team that had the NBA's best regular-season record. Milwaukee won the four games by a total of 95 points, and no game was closer than 16.

Milwaukee went 31 of 41 on free throws, while Detroit was only 9 of 12. Casey was called for a technical foul in the third, and the fans weren't at all pleased with the officiating.

At one point, Milwaukee had a 32-8 edge in free throw attempts. A stat showing that was put on the main video board, but there didn't seem to be any further reaction from the crowd.

Malcolm Brogdon remains out because of a right foot injury, but Budenholzer said he might have a better sense in the next 3-5 days about a timetable for his availability. The Bucks won every game they played against Detroit this season, including all four in the regular season. Milwaukee had not swept a best-of-7 series since the 1983 conference semifinals against Boston.

Jazz 107, Rockets 91

In Salt Lake City, Donovan Mitchell scored 19 of his 31 points in the fourth quarter to rally the Utah Jazz to a victory over the Houston Rockets in Game 4 of their Western Conference series.

Jae Crowder added 23 points. Ricky Rubio chipped in 18 points and 11 assists and Derrick Favors finished with 12 points and 11 rebounds. Utah staved off elimination to force Game 5 on Wednesday.

James Harden scored 30 points to lead Houston. Chris Paul added 23 points, eight rebounds and seven assists. Eric Gordon chipped in 16 points.

Utah's offense got a major boost from Crowder and Rubio in the first quarter. The duo combined for 25 points on 9-of-11 shooting in the quarter to help the Jazz carve out a double digit lead.

The Jazz opened the fourth quarter with a 15-1 and outscored the Rockets 31-12 in the period. Mitchell scored 13 points in three minutes to fuel the run after totaling just 12 points in the first three quarters. He capped off the surge with back-to-back 3-pointers, giving the Jazz a 91-80 lead with 9:02 remaining. Mitchell later had an incredible alley-oop dunk when he caught an errant pass and threw it down.

Crowder got things going by scoring five of Utah's first six baskets. Rubio built on the momentum by fueling a 14-1 run with four baskets and a pair of free throws. It helped the Jazz carve out a 30-16 lead with 3:03 left in the quarter.

Houston had three straight turnovers to open the door for Utah to seize a double-digit lead. The Jazz scored 10 points off six Rockets turnovers in the quarter.

An 8-0 run, capped by Austin Rivers' dunk off a steal by Chris Paul, helped Houston trim the deficit to 30-24 before quarter's end.

The Rockets continued to cut into the lead during the second quarter, but could not overtake Utah until the third quarter. Houston opened the quarter on a 10-2 run sparked by back-to-back 3-pointers from Gordon. Harden capped it off with three free throws to give the Rockets a 57-55 lead.

Harden and Gordon each shot 50 percent from 3-point range. Houston committed 16 turnovers leading to 21 points for the Jazz.The Rockets finished with just five bench points.

Celtics face tough road after ousting Pacers

INDIANAPOLIS (AP)—The Boston Celtics proved they could be every bit as physical as the Indiana Pacers in the first round of the playoffs.

They may need to be even tougher for the rest of the postseason.

After delivering the knockout blow to the Pacers with a first-round sweep, the Celtics quickly turned their attention to their next challenge: Getting back to the Eastern Conference finals.

"You can obviously take some momentum going into it and be proud of the performance you put on," said All-Star guard Kyrie Irving, who already owns one championship ring from his time with LeBron James and the Cleveland Cavaliers. "But a week later, it doesn't even matter. You've got to prove it all over again."

Certainly, the Celtics appear to have everything they need to continue playing into June.

Irving had 14 points and seven assists despite getting banged around in Sunday's 110-106 victory. He took a seat on the court in the first half after apparently getting hit in the midsection and was seen rubbing his elbow in the second half following an awkward fall. Irving insisted he was fine.

All-Star Gordon Hayward scored 20 points off the bench in his hometown and teamed up with Marcus Morris to make five 3-pointers in the decisive fourth-quarter stretch that sealed Boston's first 4-0 series win since 2011.

Forward Al Horford continues to do whatever the Celtics have asked and even younger players such as Jayson Tatum and Jaylen Brown are continuing to play key roles.

Plus, the Celtics demonstrated their capacity to win game with offense or defense.

It's a combination that should serve them well regardless of who they play next in the Eastern Conference semifinals. Top-seeded Milwaukee leads eighth-seeded Detroit 3-0.

"A lot of people downplayed Boston as a team, but we knew they would get it right come playoff time," Pacers coach Nate McMillan said. "(Coach) Brad (Stevens) has done a good job holding the team together. Now that they're in the playoffs, they're playing good basketball. Their next opponent is going to see a good team."

And an experienced team that has something to prove following last year's exit in the conference finals and this year's underachieving regular season.

Many figured that when James decided to leave for the West Coast, Boston could be the favorite with Irving and Hayward healthy.

Instead, for the first time Stevens' six seasons, the Celtics won fewer games than the previous season, and they found themselves in danger of losing home-court advantage for the first round. A strong finish to the regular season helped Boston slide into the No. 4 spot, just ahead of the short-handed Pacers, and it gave them just enough momentum.

"I appreciate the way our guys play late in games—we execute all the way through," Stevens said. "We can still execute a little bit better in the middle of the game, but we're happy to win this series."

Meanwhile, the Phoenix Suns have fired coach Igor Kokoskov after one season.

The team announced Kokoskov's firing in a statement Monday night.

A longtime NBA assistant, Kokoskov was the first European-born head coach in NBA history when Phoenix hired him to replace interim coach Jay Triano in 2018.

The Suns, despite adding No. 1 overall NBA draft pick Deandre Ayton, went 19-63 in Kokoskov's only season in the desert, worst in the Western Conference.

Phoenix had a franchise-worst 17-game losing streak in 2018-19 and became the first team in the shot-clock era (1954-55) to be held under 10 points in the first quarter of consecutive games.

The Suns recently removed the interim tag from James Jones, naming him full-time general manger.

Kokoskov's firing leaves Phoenix searching for its fifth head coach in five seasons.

Barcelona beckons for Nadal after Monte Carlo loss

BARCELONA—Rafael Nadal said on Monday he won't waste time dwelling on his weekend Monte Carlo semi-final loss but instead will concentrate on bouncing back at the Barcelona Open.

"What has happened has happened, whatever the reasons are," the 11-time Barcelona champion said after a promotional appearance at a mini-tennis event in the Catalan capital.

"I don't know the future, but I will go back to work. The job is to find myself," Nadal said.

The 17-time Grand Slam winner, who returned at Monte Carlo after a knee injury, put a positive spin on his Saturday setback against eventual tournament winner Fabio Fognini.

"Monte Carlo was a step forward compared to where I was a week earlier," Nadal said.

He was joined at a mini-tennis court set up at an ornate Barcelona classical concert hall by two-time tournament champion Kei Nishikori.

The Spaniard will open his title defence on Wednesday against Argentine Leo Mayer, a first-round winner over Marius Copil 6-3, 6-7 (3/7), 7-5.

Nadal called his first light hit-out since Saturday's loss "normal."

"It's the first day of practice in a different place. I did what I had to do," he said.

He again labelled his defeat to Fognini "one of the worst matches on clay."

"It's a reality. There is no need to hide it. I don't see any benefit in denying it."

As usual, the 32-year-old Spaniard is focusing on the bright side as the pre-Roland Garros clay season hits full stride.

"I lost a good opportunity to start the season in a fantastic way. But I've now got another one. We will know more about my form on Wednesday. This is a very special tournament that is part of the history of tennis and of my own," Nadal said.

"I have another morning to practice and we will see how we are doing. On a physical level, I'm more or less well. I've reached the finals in Australia, semi-finals in Indian Wells and now semi-finals again in Monte Carlo. The year is not bad, I'm third in the race (to the year-end championship)—but with more problems than I would have wanted."

Nadal said repeated injuries have played a role in denying him the momentum he needs.

"I have to find myself. During the last 18 months I've had too many non-tennis related stops, ups and downs. When that happens, it's hard to pick up rhythm. But it's happened so many times that the (good times) seem to be forgotten, I hope to be ready to play well, but if not here, it will be at Madrid, in Rome or at Roland Garros," the Spaniard said.

In first-round matches, new Madrid Masters tournament director Feliciano Lopez, playing as a wild card, lost to fellow Spanish veteran Fernando Verdasco, 6-4, 6-3.

Hungary's Marton Fucsovics beat Denis Kudla, 6-4, 6-1 to earn a match against fifth seed Stefanos Tsitsipas.

American youngster Mackenzie McDonald beat Japan's Taro Daniel, 6-2, 6-2 and Spaniard Jaume Munar beat Portuguese qualifier Pedro Sousa, 2-6, 6-4, 6-0.

Argentine qualifier Diego Schwartzman eliminated Yoshihito Nishioka of Japan, 4-6, 6-4, 6-2, and will face third seed Dominic Thiem.

German Jan-Lennard Struff beat Bolivian qualifier Hugo Dellien, 6-3, 6-1 and, in the last match of the day, Frenchman Benoit Paire beat Argentine Juan Ignacio Londero, 7-5, 6-2

AP

Spain's Rafael Nadal returns the ball to Italy's Fabio Fognini during their semifinal match of the Monte Carlo Tennis Masters tournament in Monaco, Saturday, April, 20, 2019.

Barcelona Open Banc Sabadell
Trofeo Conde de Godó

High school canoe season kicks off Saturday

The Public School System Interscholastic Outrigger Canoe Competition will start its series of races this Saturday at Kilili Beach.

The first leg will feature sprints events and will run from 8am to 11:30am. The second leg is set for May 4 and will also have sprint races, while the long distance event is scheduled for May 18. The season will then conclude on May 25 with the double-point sprint championships.

Northern Marianas National Paddle Sports Federation will sanction the races and will assists PSS in holding the competition for high school students. ***(Saipan Tribune)***

LOVING

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tos and Ronald Rueda hit more than two field goals for Far East with the former recording 8 points and the latter chipping in 4. Far East never managed to catch up in the fourth period after Mortos was held to a pair of free throws and Rueda had another 4-point output after finishing the half with 14.

Loving Hands kept its safe distance in the fourth canto behind James Villacrusis' 6 points and combined 8 markers from Alex Ocampo and James Kintz.

Kintz finished in double figures with his 12 points, while Ordona and Olan Tengco had 18 and 14, respectively for Loving Hands.

Rueda delivered 22 markers for Far East, while Austin Sahagun added 18.

Meanwhile, in the first game, DC leaned on its young guns to breeze past IT&E right from the opening tip.

Matt Duenas led DC with his 17 points, while Gerald Flores and Jack Aranda registered 14 markers apiece. Jaymark De Guzman and Sean Rabasto also finished in double figures for DC's balance attack, as the former netted 13 and the latter logged 10 points.

BRAVES

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the bottom of the first inning off McDonald's booboo at second base, while Babauta also scored in the second inning from their foes' error at first.

The pair of runs at the bottom of the first inning gave the Braves the temporary lead, as earlier at the top, only Chambers scored for McDonald's. However, McDonald's quickly grabbed the upper hand with a four-run top of the second and never looked back. Jordan Agulto had a two-run double in the second inning and also reached off Chamber's double, while the latter scored from a wild pitch for McDonald's 5-3 advantage after two complete innings.

McDonald's then registered one run each in the third (Lance Acosta's RBI single) and fourth (Santos' run off the Braves' miscue at first base), while the Braves failed to counter the rest of the way, allowing the former to cruise to victory.

Meanwhile, the Falcons got a free win last Saturday after the JZ Twins forfeited the curtain-raiser in the Majors division last weekend.

ROSELYN B. MONROYO

NSA Braves first baseman Willy Joe Lieto, left, catches a fly ball from McDonald's Ezra Ada during the top of the sixth inning of their Majors division game in the 2019 Saipan Little League Baseball last Saturday at the Capital Hill Ballfield.

HWANG

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after outlasting Kwon, 4-6, 6-4, 12-10.

In other results, Lee earned twin wins in the U12 age group, as she and Irin Chung edged Sikkel and Wang in the doubles, 6-3, 7-5.

In the girls U14 singles, which had a round-robin format, Hyejin Elliot notched the division title after beating Serin Chung, 6-2, 6-0, and Helen Kim, 6-1, 6-0. Kim got the runner-up honors after edging Chung, 6-3, 6-2.

Elliot also bagged the girls U18 doubles championship with Maria Gregoire as the duo was undefeated in the round-robin contest. Elliot and Gregoire prevailed over Serin and Malika Miyawaki, 6-3, 6-2, and Hong and Kim, 6-2, 6-0. Chung and Miyawaki upended Hong and Kim, 6-1, 6-1, to place second.

Miyawaki and Gregoire played in the girls U18 singles division, too with the former winning the head-to-head match, 6-0, 6-1.

In the girls U10 singles, Lina Tsukagoshi earned a 2-0 mark to rule the division. She won over Ellie Cho, 6-2, and Eunbeen Hwang, 6-1.

Inaugural Micronesian Swimming Championships

PHOTOS By JESSE ALPERT

CNMI swimmers pose with their gold medals in the over 13's 200m freestyle relay event during the awards ceremony for the Inaugural Micronesian Swimming Championships held early this month in Palau.

The CNMI's Joseph Zhang, second left, is greeted by a Palau swimmer after making it to the finals of the 100m breaststroke event.

The CNMI's Aika Watanabe, center, leads the podium finishers in the 50m butterfly event.

The CNMI's Nelson Batallones is all smiles after winning the 200m butterfly race.

Swimming Center Tsunami Saipan coach Hiro Kimura facilitates his swimmers warm-up drills.

The CNMI's Juhn Tenorio, right, poses with Palau's Noel Keane, center, and Jericho Maido after winning the bronze medal in the 100m individual medley race.

The CNMI's Kean Pajarillaga, second left, at the starting block of the 200m freestyle event.

Asaka Litulumar, right, joins Pohnpei's Kestra Kihleng, center, and the Marshall Islands' Kayla Hepler after getting the silver in the 100m butterfly race.

Harper angrily confronts umpire, Mets top Phillies

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Sports

Giannis scores 41, leads Bucks to sweep of Detroit

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McDonald's pounds Braves

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

McDonald's pounced on the NSA Braves, 16-3, during the lone Majors division game played in the 2019 Saipan Little League Baseball last Saturday at the Capital Hill Ballfield.

McDonald's saved the best for last, scoring nine runs at the top of the sixth inning for the easy win—the team's third in four games. Casey Chambers and Kazu Dela Cruz delivered two runs apiece at the top of the sixth, while Dillon Santos, M.J. Tudela, Isaiah Mesa, Ezra Ada, and Champ Aldan added one run each. Santos, Chambers, Tudela, and Dela Cruz also made one RBI apiece in McDonald's strong finish.

After pounding the Braves at the top of the sixth, Santos completed McDonald's domination after striking out three batters to end the match.

Santos worked the mound for McDonald's in three innings and threw a one-hitter, while fanning 10 batters. With Santos pitching, the Braves failed to score and reached third base only once. The McDonald's closer struck out Eric Camacho and Marino Santos for a 1-2-3 inning in third, as leadoff batter Fabio Norita earlier flied out. Santos then gave up a single to leadoff batter Aldrin Flores in the fourth before fanning Jacob Babauta and Willy Lieto, while Nick Taisacan went down on a 4-3 play to end the inning.

It was also a quick fifth inning for the Braves with Santos striking out Kallan Sadley and Norita after leadoff Stanley Iakopo flied out at second. The same thing happened in the last inning with the Braves done after only three batters.

Santos and starting pitcher Mesa combined for 15 strikeouts. Mesa gave up no hits and earned runs, as the Braves' three runs were scored off errors at first and second base. Iakopo and Norita reached at

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ROSELYN B. MONROYO
McDonald's closer Dillon Santos prepares to deliver a pitch during the bottom of the fifth inning of their Majors division game against the NSA Braves in the 2019 Saipan Little League Baseball last Saturday at the Capital Hill Ballfield.

Hwang completes sweep

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

Juncheol Hwang claimed the boys U12 singles championships in all three competitions under Northern Mariana Islands Tennis Association's calendar of events for the 2018-2019 season.

Hwang earned the sweep following a 6-0, 6-1 triumph over perennial rival Nason Wessel in the 2019 DFS CNMI Junior Championships last Sunday at the American Memorial Park tennis courts. Hwang also defeated Wessel, 6-2, 6-3, in the boys U12 singles finale in the 19th Pacific Islands Club Tennis Championships last month, while the former's first title in the division was recorded in the 2019 White Coconut Tennis Classic in February against June Yu, 6-1, 6-1.

Hwang arranged his second straight finals showdown against Wessel after dominating Wataku Kadokura in the semifinals, 6-0, 6-0. Kadokura marched into the Final Four following a 6-1, 4-6, 10-5 triumph over Kisuk Lee. Wessel, on the other hand, stunned No. 2 seed June Yu in the semis, 6-4, 6-3, for another title duel with Hwang. Yu settled the for the third place honors after downing Kadokura, 6-4, 6-4.

Meanwhile, No. 2 Dana Lee took the girls U12 singles crown after defeating the unranked Hoo Wang in the finals, 6-3, 6-0.

Lee barged into the championship game after prevailing against Seiyul Hong, 6-3, 7-5, while Wang advanced off a walkover win against No. 1 seed Irin Chung. Before losing in the semifinals, Wang won over Anna Kwon, 6-3, 6-7 (6), 10-7, while Hong outclassed Savita Sikkel, 6-4, 6-4. Hong ended up in third place, while Sikkel triumphed in the other consolation match

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ROSELYN B. MONROYO
Juncheol Hwang gets ready to serve to Nason Wessel in their boys U12 singles title game in the 2019 DFS CNMI Junior Championships last Sunday at the American Memorial Park tennis courts.

Loving Hands, DC down foes

By ROBY N. PAMINTUAN
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CORRESPONDENT

Loving Hands and DC earned double-digit winning margins in their respective games in the 2019 Civic Center Inter-color Basketball League last Sunday at the Civic Center Basketball Court.

Loving Hands outclassed Far East in the second game, 86-76, while DC walloped IT&E in the curtain-raiser, 82-50.

Loving Hands' third-quarter surge fueled its 10-point victory.

Ahead by only 5 at the end of the first half, 42-37, Loving Hands scored 24 points in the penultimate canto—the most points it delivered in a quarter—to take a 66-55 lead. Adi Ordona led Loving Hands' third-quarter assault after making 7 points, while June Alipio and Jun Tabora added 4 markers each, and four others contributed at least one field goal apiece.

In contrast, only Andy Mor-

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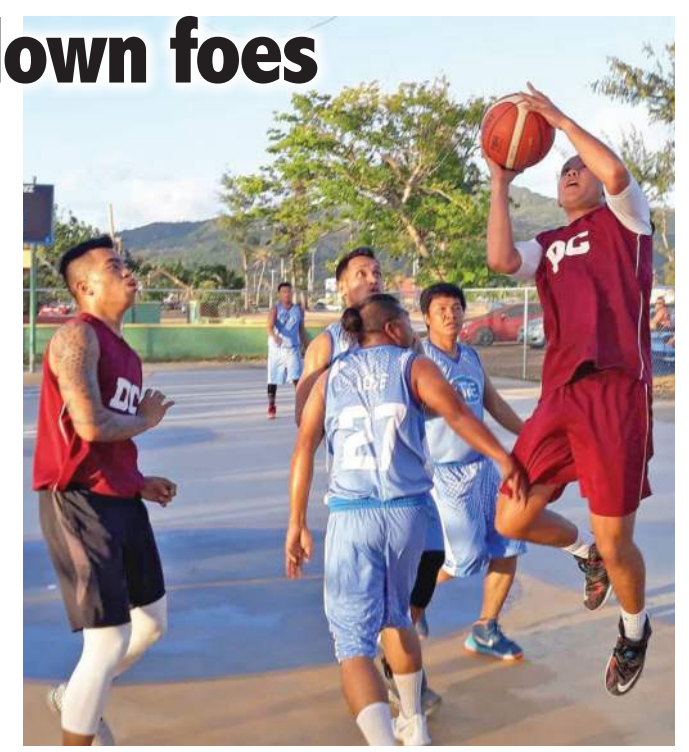

ROBY N. PAMINTUAN
DC's Gerald Flores, right, drives against IT&E defenders during their game in the Civic Center caging last Sunday at the Civic Center Basketball Court.